

# Policy WATCH

Volume XIII, Issue 7  
July 2024, New Delhi

## Constitutional Values and Democratic Institutions

*In this issue*

**The Constitution, a surprise entrant in poll battlefield**  
*by Yamini Aiyar and Neelanjan Sircar*

**Reimagining Indian federalism - The return of coalition governance to New Delhi offers hope**  
*by Shashi Tharoor*

**Resolution adopted at the 2nd National Convention, 8-9 July 2024, Sevagram, Wardha - Bharat Jodo Abhiyaan**

**भारत जोड़ो अभियान – यात्रा बदलाव की – सोच से सियासत की**  
*by मृत्युंजय राय*

**The Nordic Exceptionalism: What explains why the Nordic countries are constantly among the happiest in the world**  
*by Frank Martela, Bent Greve, Bo Rothstein, Juho Saari*

**Global and Indian trends on data Sharing and protection – a synthesis of three articles**



# Contents

---

<b>Editorial.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2 The Constitution, a surprise entrant in poll battlefield by Yamini Aiyar and Neelanjan Sircar.....</b>	<b>5</b>
2.1 The rhetoric of electoral dominance.....	5
2.2 An interplay in north India.....	7
2.3 A mirror to contradictions.....	8
<b>3 Reimagining Indian federalism - The return of coalition governance to New Delhi offers hope, by Shashi Tharoor.....</b>	<b>9</b>
3.1 A brand of federalism.....	9
3.2 Do coalition governments slow down the economic reforms agenda?.....	10
3.3 The concerns of the southern States.....	11
3.4 Revive the Inter-State Council.....	12
<b>4 Resolution adopted at the 2nd National Convention, 8-9 July 2024, Sevagram, Wardha - Bharat Jodo Abhiyaan.....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>5 भारत जोड़ो अभियान – यात्रा बदलाव की – सोच से सियासत की - मृत्युंजय राय.....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>6 The Nordic Exceptionalism: What explains why the Nordic countries are constantly among the happiest in the world - by Frank Martela, Bent Greve, Bo Rothstein, Juho Saari.....</b>	<b>24</b>
6.1 Introduction.....	24
6.2 Review of existing explanations.....	25
6.3 Examining Nordic countries in WHR data.....	31
6.4 History and the Hunt for the Root Cause.....	34
6.5 Conclusion.....	37
6.6 References and Endnotes.....	38
<b>7 Global and Indian trends on data Sharing and protection – a synthesis of three articles.....</b>	<b>39</b>
7.1 What is the India Digital Personal Data Protection Act (DPDPA) 2023?.....	39
7.2 India’s Digital Personal Data Protection Act 2023 vs. the GDPR: A Comparison.....	41
7.3 Marking the Web’s 35th Birthday: An Open Letter from Tim Berners-Lee.....	44
7.4 Solid.....	45



RAJIV GANDHI  
INSTITUTE FOR CONTEMPORARY STUDIES

# I. Editorial

The Rajiv Gandhi Institute for Contemporary Studies (RGICS) is the knowledge affiliate of the Rajiv Gandhi Foundation. RGICS carries out research and analysis as well as policy advocacy on contemporary challenges facing India. RGICS currently undertakes research studies on the following five themes of general public utility including:

- Constitutional Values and Democratic Institutions
- Growth with Employment
- Governance and Development
- Environment, Natural Resources and Sustainability
- India's Place in the World

The July 2024 issue of Policy Watch is on the theme Constitutional Values and Democratic Institutions. This January issue on this theme focussed on the fact that our Constitutional Values and Democratic Institutions were under serious threat. The Lok Sabha elections 2024 have changed that.

Though the assault on Constitutional Values and Democratic Institutions continues, the loss of majority in the Lok Sabha and severe election reverses for the BJP particularly in Uttar Pradesh, show that the people of India have spoken and their message is clear – they do not want anyone in power who violates Constitutional Values and Democratic Institutions

The first article is by Yamini Aiyar and Nilanjan Sircar was first published in *The Hindu* on May 31, 2024 and is reproduced with gratitude. Presciently, based on interviews with common people in Uttar Pradesh, five days before the election results, they wrote: “The fact that the ordinary Indian is worried about the Constitution is of far greater political significance than the question of who wins the election.

Against the backdrop of total dominance that the BJP projected at the start of the electoral campaign, the concerns over the Constitution, expressed by the ordinary voters, are constitutive of growing anxieties over democratic erosion. And it constrains the democratic legitimacy of the government even if the BJP comes to power again, as projected.”

Federalism is a key feature of the Indian Constitution. The second article on Reimagining India's Federalism is by Shashi Tharoor which was first published in *The Hindu* on June 21, 2024 and is reproduced with gratitude. He states that “Despite Prime Minister Modi's rhetoric of cooperative federalism, all we have seen is the rise of a coercive and combative brand of federalism that seeks to centralise power at the expense of the States.”

The actions of the new government do not give much hope for change, particularly for Southern states in none of which is the BJP in power (though in AP their NDA coalition partner TDP is in power.) As Tharoor points out, within a day of coming to power – “On June 10, 2024, Uttar Pradesh received a whopping ₹25,069 crore of tax devolution, a figure greater than all our five southern States collectively received. Bihar and Madhya Pradesh got the next largest allocations.”

Images Courtesy:

Google Images (free to use images)

freepik

To highlight this further, RGICS Visiting Fellow, Arnab Bose has carried out a detailed study of various constitutional violations linked to Federalism and we will be publishing that study separately.

In the January issue we had carried an article by Col (retd.) Ravinder Pal Singh in which he strongly argued that social cohesion provides essential preconditions for socio-economic development and national security. Social cohesion is foundation of the values and principles of the Indian Constitution. In this issue, the next article we carry is on how the Nordic countries have achieved high levels of happiness and prosperity through social cohesion.

Three Nordic countries – Denmark, Finland, and Sweden – occupy the top three positions in the index of social cohesion, making trust and social cohesion an explanation for the Nordic happiness. In a recent study cited in the article, Delhey and Dragolov defined social cohesion as having three dimensions including connectedness to other people, having good social relations, and having a focus on the common good. They found that both the aggregate level of social cohesion as well as each of the three dimensions individually were associated with higher well-being. There are lessons to be learned from the Nordic countries, by India's political leaders and social thinkers

In a practical attempt to build social cohesion, Rahul Gandhi had conducted the Bharat Jodo Yatra from Kanyakumari to Kashmir in 2022-2023. The Yatra was an assertion of our Constitutional Values and Democratic Institutions. The Bharat Jodo Yatra led some citizen activists to establish the Bharat Jodo Abhiyaan in February 2023. It played a very active role in building citizens' awareness about the threat that was being posed to Constitutional Values and Democratic Institutions.

In the fourth article, we reproduce the resolution that was adopted by over 250 citizen-activists in the second Annual General Meeting of the Bharat Jodo Abhiyaan, which was held in Sevagram, Wardha on 8-9 July. The resolution describes the work that was done as well as the strategy for the future.

The next article is in Hindi written by Mreetyunjay Rai, a citizen-activist who was associated with the Uttar Pradesh Democratic Federation and the state election campaign in 2022. Later he worked as an anchor person for the Bharat Jodo Abhiyaan in Eastern UP or Purvanchal during the 2024 Lok Sabha elections Rai describes in detail what kind of grassroots mobilisation was done which resulted in the stunning results in UP.

Finally, we turn our attention to an all pervasive phenomenon – our life swims in a sea of data. As this engulfs more and more people and a larger and larger part of our lives, it has become necessary to come up with a societal consensus and a legislative and regulatory framework for the sharing and protection of data.

India enacted the Digital Personal Data Protection Act 2023 (DPDPA) and we carry a brief description of it and a comparison of it with the pioneering General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) enacted by the European Union.

We end with an open letter issued by Sir Tim Berners-Lee, the creator of the World Wide Web, on the 35th anniversary of the WWW in March 2024, where he points to some of the dysfunctionalities caused by the web being dominated by the self-interest of several corporations in the past decade. He suggests a SOLID solution which is also briefly described.

**We hope this issue is found useful and interesting by our readers.**

**Vijay Mahajan, Director,  
Rajiv Gandhi Institute for Contemporary Studies (RGICS)**

## 2. The Constitution, a surprise entrant in poll battlefield

---

*Yamini Aiyar and Neelanjan Sircar*<sup>1</sup>

The Chakkipat neighbourhood of Agra in Uttar Pradesh was adorned with flags of B.R. Ambedkar with the tagline *kalam ka badshah* (master of the pen), an allusion to the seminal role of Ambedkar in drafting the Constitution of India. We spoke to a group of young Jatav men, once a core vote bank of the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP). As the BSP's graph has trended downward, these men had voted for the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in the 2019 general election, but they will not support the BJP this time. The reason, the Constitution — "Dr. Ambedkar means everything to us. We don't think it's too easy to change the Constitution, but we believe the BJP wants to change the Constitution."



*Source: Image*

### 2.1 The rhetoric of electoral dominance

Why has the Constitution emerged as an explicit site of contestation in this election? The proximate trigger was the BJP's declaration of "400 paar" (a reference to its assertion of winning 400 seats) and remarks, by some leaders, early in the campaign, that total electoral domination in this election would empower the BJP to change the Constitution.

Opposition leaders were quick to mobilise. BSP leader Mayawati's nephew and former BSP national coordinator Akash Anand gave rousing speeches. Indeed, days after Ms. Mayawati sacked Akash Anand, the Samajwadi Party leader Akhilesh Yadav took to X (formerly Twitter) to publicly remark that even traditional voters of the BSP are voting for the INDIA bloc to save the Constitution.

The Congress's Rahul Gandhi has taken to symbolically waving a copy of the Constitution at his campaign rallies. The Opposition has declared this election to be a battle for "saving the constitution" and it is having resonance on the ground.

---

<sup>1</sup> Reproduced with gratitude from The Hindu, June 15, 2024  
<https://www.thehindu.com/opinion/lead/the-constitution-a-surprise-entrant-in-poll-battlefield/article68225687.ece>

Scholars make an important distinction between constitutional principles and ordinary laws. Constitutional principles frame fundamental rights and are of a “higher order” that every citizen must obey. Ordinary laws, on the other hand, are rules, often guided by constitutional principles, that govern society. Ordinary laws, in India, regularly police our spaces.

They discriminate and are used coercively by the state in ways that undermine freedoms and disempower citizens. Laws that police who you can marry, whether you can use the Internet and what you can eat are some illustrations of this. However, these laws can also be challenged and changed. Constitutional values provide the basis for challenging discriminatory law.

Historian Rohit De’s book, *A People’s Constitution*, offers a powerful account of how ordinary citizens have mobilised around constitutional principles throughout independent India’s history to secure rights. Challenging social and economic deprivation and preserving equality of status are at the heart of India’s constitutional project.

As former Chief Justice of India Y.V. Chandrachud powerfully notes, in the *Minerva Mills* case, the Constitution provides us “the obligation of securing to the people liberty of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship; equality of status and of opportunity and the assurance that the dignity of the individual will at all costs be preserved”. It is when these very constitutional values are challenged that the Constitution rather than law enters the domain of mass politics.

A young BJP supporter from the Pasi community makes this clear. “I am happy with Narendra Modi..... But I absolutely don’t want a Hindu rashtra.” When we ask him what Hindu rashtra means, he responds in one word: *bhedbhav* (discrimination).

A young Yadav farmer on the outskirts of Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh concurs, “The constitution matters because it protects us... it gave us reservations. Humein Samvidhaan bachana hai (the Constitution must be protected).”



## 2.2 An interplay in north India



[Source: Image](#)

The interplay between the Constitution and political mobilisation has fundamentally shaped the trajectory of democratic politics in North India.

Reservations found place in the Constitution primarily as compensatory provisions to redress historical disadvantage emerging in the 1990s as the primary mobilisational tool for asserting representational claims of lower caste groups in the 1990s.

The Modi juggernaut, with its ability to forge a cross-caste coalition, appeared to have shifted the arc by forging a cross-caste, Hindu coalition. For much of this decade, the logic of caste-based mobilisation seemed to have receded in the background, allowing the BJP, to introduce and pass the 103rd Amendment to the Constitution mandating 10% reservations for economically weaker sections (EWS) amongst unreserved (read upper caste) categories, to muted opposition.

The reemergence of the grammar of the Constitution, rights and reservation in the 2024 election must not be misread as harking back to the Mandal politics of yore. There is something far more significant at play here. The rhetoric of “changing the Constitution” challenges the very principles upon which this country was founded.

And it is this that is causing dissonance among voters with the BJP’s logic of cross-caste political mobilisation. The Yadav voter we spoke to articulated this clearly: “The Constitution protects our fundamental rights. It ensures equality between castes and communities.”

The fact that the ordinary Indian is worried about the Constitution is of far greater political significance than the question of who wins the election.

Against the backdrop of total dominance that the BJP projected at the start of the electoral campaign, the concerns over the Constitution, expressed by the ordinary voters, are constitutive of growing anxieties over democratic erosion. And it constrains the democratic legitimacy of the government even if the BJP comes to power again, as projected.

## 2.3 A mirror to contradictions



But the constitutional discourse also mirrors the deep contradictions that have shaped contemporary politics in India. It is instructive that even as Dalit voters speak of the Constitution and rights, the constitutional principle of “secularism” and religious equality was a concern expressed primarily by Muslim voters, who spoke repeatedly against “Hindu-Muslim” politics.

Secularism, via the Constitution, found voice during the protests against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act back in early 2020, but only among Muslims.

Arguably, the heightened polarised rhetoric adopted by the Prime Minister in recent weeks is a response to the re-emergence of caste coalitions with the Constitution as the centre-piece.

Hindu voters are not blind to the communal nature of this rhetoric. However, this is not their primary concern. Their preoccupation is primarily with caste-based discrimination and reservations. The silence around the constitutional aspiration of secularism remains conspicuous against the backdrop of the deeply poisonous and divisive Hindu-Muslim rhetoric that has dominated this election.

If the 2024 election is indeed a battle for the Constitution, then the silences tell us as much about the critical fault lines that our polity has to confront, as it does of the possibilities of a more substantive politics of rights and equality.

*Yamini Aiyar is a public policy scholar; Neelanjan Sircar is Senior Fellow, Centre for Policy Research*





## 3. Reimagining Indian federalism - The return of coalition governance to New Delhi offers hope

---

*Shashi Tharoor*<sup>2</sup>



*Source: Image*

On June 4, 2024, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) tripped up short of the majority mark in the Lok Sabha, compelling it to hobble towards power by leaning heavily on its partners in the National Democratic Alliance, all of which are regional parties.

Aside from placing fetters on the BJP's overweening arrogance and decelerating our descent into majoritarian autocracy, the return to New Delhi of coalition governance offers another hope: that of revitalising India's beleaguered federal structure, which has sustained countless death blows over the past decade.

### 3.1 A brand of federalism

As I argued in the Lok Sabha last year — while opposing the Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi (Amendment) Act, 2023 — what we have repeatedly seen since 2014 is an insidious, inexorable effort to curtail the autonomy of our States.

Despite Prime Minister Narendra Modi's rhetoric of cooperative federalism, all we have seen is the rise of a coercive and combative brand of federalism that seeks to centralise power at the expense of the States.

---

<sup>2</sup> Reproduced with gratitude from The Hindu, June 15, 2024  
<https://www.thehindu.com/opinion/lead/reimagining-indian-federalism/article68290374.ece>

This Modi-fied brand of federalism has been manifest in seeking to foist Hindi upon our southern States; deploying independent regulatory and investigative agencies (such as the Enforcement Directorate, the Central Bureau of Investigation and Income-Tax agencies) to clamp down on political opponents from regional parties; using an obscure provision of the Disaster Management Act to impose a nationwide lockdown without consulting the Chief Ministers who had to implement it; creating and misusing the Prime Minister's Citizen Assistance and Relief in Emergency Situations (PM CARES) Fund, which limited the flow of cash to State-run Chief Minister's Distress Relief Funds; and robbing Jammu and Kashmir of Statehood and abrogating Article 370 in a manner that sets an ominous precedent for all other States.

One must add to this litany, the tendency to undermine the careful balance in our fiscal federalism that previous governments had maintained, distributing revenues in a way that left it to our States to pursue their own priorities. This balance has been disturbed using a number of cynical tools, such as levying cess on a large number of items. Unlike tax, cess does not go into the divisible revenue pool and does not need to be shared with States.

### 3.2 Do coalition governments slow down the economic reforms agenda?



*Source: Image*

Another shadow hangs over the federal system with the impending lapse of the 91st Amendment in 2026. This guarantees that the share of parliamentary constituencies across States would be based on the 1971 Census, in order not to punish those States that had empowered their women, improved human development indicators and curbed their population.

The ruling party has made it clear that they have no intention of renewing this provision and are looking forward with glee to a fresh Census and a new delimitation exercise. The major concern of many federalists is that this could lead — given both demographic realities and the BJP's own inclinations — to the Hindi-speaking States of the "cow belt" acquiring a two-thirds majority by themselves, in effect disenfranchising the southern States. This would give the BJP a permanent stranglehold on our Parliament and would lead to a severe crisis of our democracy as well as our federalism.

The BJP's hyper-nationalist desire for uniformity was already evident in its decision in 2017 to change the terms of reference of the Fifteenth Finance Commission to base allocations on the 2011 Census, instead of 1971's (following the same rationale) This proved pernicious, sending even more tax money from the south to the north than previously. Commentators spoke of the government rewarding "brute demographic advantage ... over a state's performance," adding that the Fifteenth Finance Commission decisions were "a stunning rebuke of success".

### 3.3 The concerns of the southern States

Most people in the south are staunch Indian nationalists who recognise full well the need to correct regional imbalances, and for richer States to subsidise poorer ones. But we must ensure that this balancing act does not become financial persecution of our southern States.

For, unlike most federal systems, India's revenues are going disproportionately to its worst-performing States, those with rampant illiteracy, high rates of fertility and population growth, while the high-performing southern States get short shrift. On June 10, 2024, Uttar Pradesh received a whopping ₹25,069 crore of tax devolution, a figure greater than all our five southern States collectively received. Bihar and Madhya Pradesh got the next largest allocations.

The concerns of our southern States about delimitation are not unfounded: Uttar Pradesh and Bihar are likely to together outweigh them all combined. May we dare hope that one of the BJP's two crutches, with 16 seats in the Lok Sabha, the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, N. Chandrababu Naidu, will refuse to make the mistake of allowing such a fate to befall South India? Whether he does or does not, the other southern Chief Ministers are bound to be speaking to each other, to ward off the threat of political disenfranchisement.

The interests of millions are entwined with the success of this exercise, in which the principles of equitable redistribution and representation should weigh heavily. All States, ultimately, must work together to devise a solution.

There are no early signs that the large number of regional parties in the NDA might bolster India's federal structure. Most regional members — chief among them the Telugu Desam Party, Janata Dal (United) and Lok Janshakti Party (Ram Vilas) — have for now contented themselves with securing cabinet births (not even major or pivotal ministries) and greater perquisites for their own States (such as demanding special status for Andhra Pradesh and Bihar).

While they may keep the BJP on a relatively short leash, stanching the tide of the Hindutva project and demanding that contentious schemes (such as Agniveer) be reconsidered, they are not necessarily likely to rally around the cause of strengthening cooperative federalism. Seeking a larger slice of the pie for their own States is self-interest, not federalism.

When he was the Chief Minister of Gujarat, Narendra Modi was an unwavering federalist who championed decentralised policy-making. In his view, in a country as diverse as India, there could never be a universal, Union Government-devised panacea for the ills of all States, so, each should be able to innovate and tailor solutions to their peculiar problems.

Each State in India, argued then Chief Minister Modi, ought to forge its own development path, engaging with other States in a spirit of "competitive" federalism, which meant attracting investment and improving governance, and stoutly resisting the encroachment of the central government on States' rights. And, in many ways, Mr. Modi exemplified these tenets — until he became Prime Minister, that is.

### 3.4 Revive the Inter-State Council

Can Opposition-ruled States, especially in the south, leverage the BJP's reduced majority to the benefit of cooperative federalism? The abolition of the Planning Commission has deprived them of a vital forum. If that cannot be undone, a good starting point would be extracting the Inter-State Council from the throes of desuetude.

Though its rationale had long been outlined in Article 263 of the Constitution, it was convened only in the 1990s on the recommendation of the Sarkaria Commission. But, despite having the potential to become a formidable forum of deliberation, the Council has degenerated into a mere appendage of the Ministry of Home Affairs, in whose shadow it scarcely has any authority.

So the Inter-State Council must be overhauled and revived to serve as an independent arena for consultation, decision-making, dispute resolution, and coordination between States and various governmental departments and levels of government on issues that affect the States.



*Source: Image*

In a country such as India, whose diversity is held together by a sense of common belonging but whose civic nationalism must accommodate a range of States with divergent levels of development, it is essential that all feel that their common nationhood is a winning proposition for them. In a country where regional, religious, and linguistic tensions are never far from the surface, an answer such as, “We have more people, so we will have more money and power”, risks rupturing the fragile bonds that hold us all together.

*Shashi Tharoor is the fourth-term Lok Sabha Member of Parliament (Congress) for Thiruvananthapuram, and the Sahitya Akademi award winning author of 25 books, including Ambedkar: A Life*



## 4. Resolution adopted at the 2nd National Convention, 8-9 July 2024, Sevagram, Wardha - Bharat Jodo Abhiyaan

---



Bharat Jodo Abhiyaan [BJA] was born as an extraordinary initiative of the citizens of India at an extraordinary moment of our national life. On 6 February 2023, immediately after the successful completion of the historic Bharat Jodo Yatra, we had gathered at the Constitution Club in Delhi to embark upon a seven year long mission by launching a movement “that can reclaim our republic, renew our Constitutional values, rescue our democratic institutions and rekindle the spirit of our freedom struggle”. In the last year and a half, the Bharat Jodo Abhiyaan has played a historic role in bringing together various movements, organisations, groups and individuals in this collective endeavour that has resulted in the extraordinary outcome of the historic Lok Sabha election of 2024.

We meet today at the historic Sevagram (Wardha) to renew our collective resolve and to resume our journey. The BJA originated as a response to a danger, an unprecedented assault on the idea of India, a brick by brick dismantling of our republic as a result of a full-scale war on our constitutional values and democratic institutions launched by the BJP-RSS regime since 2014. The founding conference of the BJA had outlined the challenge in no uncertain terms:

“We have seen brute majoritarian takeover of democratic apparatus, subversion of institutions, suppression of free media, choking of freedom of expression, criminalization of dissent, breakdown of rule of law and use of state and street power to crush political opponents.

We have seen rolling back of the secular state, de facto demotion of religious minorities to a second grade citizenship, state sponsored campaigns of hatred and bigotry against them, retreat from affirmative action and sanction of caste-based oppression and exclusion, and blatant endorsement of patriarchal norms and practices.

We have seen ordinary people facing the brunt of economic recession, unemployment and inflation, while the present regime is busy favouring its bloated cronies, defending their financial frauds and selling the family silver. Diversion, distraction and division are the favourite political tactics of this regime.

We have seen the rise of a diabolic propaganda machine, led by mainstream media that has turned into a megaphone for the government, to cover up the current regime's criminal indifference to handling the Covid pandemic, professional incompetence in managing the economy and dereliction of the national duty to safeguard the country's borders...

This is the moment to unite the people of India in defence of our constitution. This is the moment to fuse the energies of all parties that stand with the constitution with that of people's movements, civil society institutions and social activists. This is the moment to mobilize the public to reclaim our republic.”

Drawing its strength from the Bharat Jodo Yatra as well as the various movements for resistance, the BJA had accepted a double responsibility: defeating the BJP in the Lok Sabha elections of 2024 and launching the long-term ideological, cultural and political struggle for re-enchanting our constitutional values. Accordingly, the BJA had taken on the responsibility of engaging with political parties that were committed to defending the republic.

After the formation of INDIA coalition, the BJA had declared its support to this coalition as the only effective and viable alternative to the BJP and its allies. At the same time the BJA had also committed itself to long-term action by way of articulating a vision of India for our times in line with the Constitutional vision, amplifying this vision through mainstream and alternative media, creating a community of believers in the constitutional idea of India by recruiting and training a battery of volunteers to shape public opinion on the ground and supporting movements and campaigns of resistance.

In the last year and a half, the BJA has thrown itself fully into this mission. The General Secretary's Report of Activities spells out all the work that the BJA and its associates have done in the run up to the Lok Sabha elections 2024. Beginning with the Karnataka assembly elections, the BJA has worked tirelessly to bring citizens, movement groups, civil society institutions, activists, and social media activists to join hands with INDIA coalition parties.

Besides influencing the electoral outcome, the BJA and its associates helped to foreground peoples' issues, expose the lies of Modi regime and democratise the process of elections. Never before had any non-party initiative done so much to inform, educate and mobilise citizens in defence of our constitutional democracy as has been done by the Bharat Jodo Abhiyaan and other civil society organisations in the run up to and during the recent parliamentary election.

The Lok Saha election of 2024 was no ordinary election. This was more like a plebiscite through which Narendra Modi sought post-facto approval for his authoritarian deeds and a popular mandate for the proposed mutilation of the Constitution. The regime had ensured that everything was stacked against its opponents, so as to make the elections a mere formality.

The BJP had virtually infinite resources, both white and black at its disposal, while the Opposition was denied access to its own bank accounts. All the investigative and official agencies— the ED, the CBI, Income Tax, police and administration — was deployed to hound the Opposition, with the judiciary a mute spectator. The mainstream media turned into a megaphone for the ruling party, actively promoting the myth of “400 paar” and running down the Opposition parties. Sadly, the institution of the Election Commission of India was also compromised, as it presided over blatant communal hatred-mongering by Modi and other BJP leaders.

This was undoubtedly the most unfair national election in the history of independent India. Yet, the people of India refused to grant the stamp of approval that this regime so badly needed. In the backdrop of all the systemic manipulations and the relentless propaganda of 400-paar, the ruling party's final tally of 240 is undoubtedly a moral and political defeat for the BJP and a personal defeat for Narendra Modi.

He may have cobbled together a majority with the help of NDA partners, but the third Modi government does not enjoy a popular mandate. Had the election been a shade fairer, and if the media and pollsters had not misled the country into believing the inevitability of a Modi victory, there was no way NDA could have secured even the bare majority that it did.

This convention salutes peoples movements, especially the historic farmers' morcha and the resistance against Citizenship Amendment Act that paved the way for democratic resistance against this authoritarian regime.



[Source: Image](#)

We also recall the various struggles and protests, including the nationwide protest against dilution of SC/ST atrocities act, land acquisition and corporate takeover of forests, paper leaks and irregularities in public sector recruitments and the protest by women wrestlers for keeping alive the flame of democracy through these dark times.

While mainstream media, with some honourable exceptions, acted as the lapdog of the regime, the contribution of alternative media, including social media and YouTubers, deserves a special mention. Above all, we must salute the wisdom of ordinary citizens of India, especially the poor, the disadvantaged and the minorities who saw through the games of the ruling dispensation and refused to be hoodwinked by the divisive games of the BJP and the RSS.

The stunning outcome of this election has opened a window of democratic opportunity. The INDIA coalition may not have secured a majority, but the Opposition has regained its self-confidence and its voice, as seen in the first session of the new Lok Sabha. Democratic institutions may not have changed overnight, but democratic checks and balances are beginning to be visible, opening the space for democratic resistance. The people have refused to fall prey to the divisive agenda unleashed after the consecration of the Ayodhya temple. The designs for mutilation of the Constitution has been foiled. This is undoubtedly a victory of the people, of democracy and of the Constitution of India.

While the onward march of Modi's authoritarianism has been halted, the BJP's stranglehold overpower has not been reversed. The BJP has expanded its reach in the southern and eastern coastal belt. Its electoral dominance remains unchallenged in states like Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Uttarakhand. It still remains the largest single party and continues to dominate North and West of India.

While people refused to vote on the Ram temple, the communal poison and majoritarian mind-set is very much around. Above all, the BJP again controls state power, that it continues to use to consolidate its authoritarian and communal designs. The danger that the BJA was formed to combat is far from over.

Developments since the formation of the third Modi government serve to remind us of the dangers that lie ahead. The last one month has witnessed renewed incidents of lynching of Muslims, repeated use of bulldozers as a form of community punishment mostly against Muslims and brazen anti-Muslim hate speech in public. It is a matter of deep concern that some of these incidents have taken place in opposition ruled states as well.



[Source: Image](#)

The implementation of the three foundational criminal codes that were rushed in without proper parliamentary deliberations, threatens to open floodgates of a police state. The 'Public Security Bill' recently introduced in the Maharashtra assembly supposedly to curb 'urban naxals' demonstrates evil designs of the current regime to suppress all dissent and protest.

The central government has resumed its assault against human rights activists and dissenters like Arundhati Roy, Dr Shoeb Shaukat and Medha Patkar. The government's and the speakers' conduct during the parliament session and its refusal to hold a discussion over the NEET scandal shows that it is unwilling to follow the protocols of parliamentary democracy. Its continued silence on the raging civil war in Manipur demonstrates scant regard for human lives and national unity.

If anything, the current regime may turn even more repressive so as to regain its waning control over power. The Presidential address confirms that this government has learnt nothing from the people's rebuke. By all accounts, the wounded predator is even more dangerous than before.

The current historical juncture presents the BJA with both a challenge and an opportunity. The challenge is to ward off the danger of authoritarianism and majoritarianism that still looms large on the horizon.



The opportunity is to push national politics in a pro-people direction, towards social justice, economic equality and ecologically sustainable policies. The challenge and the opportunity are intertwined. It is only by creating a coalition of the bottom of the social pyramid, that the authoritarian and majoritarian politics can be effectively reversed. Thus the task for any patriotic and democratic Indian is cut out.

We must defend constitutional values and democratic institutions, by forging and consolidating a social coalition of the marginalised classes and communities— women, farmers, workers, dalit, adivasi, OBC, minorities and all other marginalised people.

The BJA was envisioned as a seven-year mission till the 30th January 2030. The first leg of this journey has given us greater confidence, and taught us many valuable lessons. We have a long way to go in realising our mission. Now that we have a foothold, we must plan the second leg of this journey to encompass the larger ideological political challenge as well.

Accordingly, while we continue to address the immediate challenge of combating the BJP in coordination with major opposition parties in the forthcoming assembly elections, this is the time to focus on non-electoral tasks of strengthening movements of resistance and cultural-ideological battle for reclaiming our republic.

Specifically, this convention of the BJA resolves to take our work forward in multiple directions:

A. We shall focus on supporting INDIA candidates in the forthcoming state assembly elections in Haryana, Jammu & Kashmir, Jharkhand and Maharashtra, so as to ensure electoral decline and fall of the BJP and its allies, while continuing to press for truly free and fair elections;

B. We shall mobilise and train volunteers all over the country so as to create a cadre of citizens committed to the defence of the Constitution;

C. We shall work with the various protests and peoples movements, civil society organisations and the like minded political parties so as to strengthen democratic resistance; and

D. We shall make effective use of media and social media to combat the propaganda of this regime and strengthen communication channels to spread the ideology of the Constitution of India.

This Convention authorises the newly elected team of office bearers to frame a programme of action in this light and constitute organisational teams at various levels as per the Rules of the BJA.

The Preamble to the Constitution of India, read with Fundamental Rights and the Directive Principles of State Policy, continues to be our guiding light in this battle. The founding convention had specified our ideological non-negotiables as follows:

“1. A secular state that has no official religion and that offers equal respect to and maintains principled distance from all religions;

2. Social justice via state policies to recognize, monitor and neutralize caste and gender based inequalities and oppressions;

3. Participatory, transparent and decentralized democracy that ensures freedom of expression and values independent functioning of all democratic institutions;

4. A welfare state that puts people before profit, places wellbeing of the last person first and rejects unthinking privatization and crony capitalism;

5. Policies that recognize peoples' right to natural resources and our responsibility to promote climate resilience by balancing the interests of environment and economy;

6. Positive nationalism, that focuses on achieving national unity, promotes dialogue with our own citizens in conflict zones and seeks peace with external neighbours; and

7. Pride in our cultural and civilizational heritage in its glorious multiplicity that entails a responsibility to filter out caste, gender or any other oppression in its name”.

Today at the historic Sevagram, as we remember the legacy of Mahatma Gandhi, we reiterate our commitment to these principles drawn from our freedom struggle and embedded into Babasaheb's Constitution. We are here to say:

The spirit of India shall triumph. Our civilizational heritage of co-living shall triumph. The legacy of our freedom struggle and that of various peoples' struggles in independent India shall triumph.

We take a pledge to resume our journey to redeem the Constitutional pledge of securing for all our citizens “social, economic and political justice, liberty of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship; equality of status and of opportunity; and fraternity”.

We call upon all those citizens, groups, organisations and parties who stand by the foundational values of our republic to come forward and join this national mission to reclaim our republic.

Jai Hind!



[Source: Image](#)



## 5. भारत जोड़ो अभियान – यात्रा बदलाव की – सोच से सियासत की

मृत्युंजय राय



[Source: Image](#)

छतों पर, बालकनियों में, गलियों में, दरवाजों पर बड़ी भीड़ खड़ी थी, हर हाथ में शोर करने के लिए कुछ न कुछ था, घर में पड़े बर्तन, शंख, घंटी वो कुछ भी जिससे शोर उत्पन्न हो सके, एक शोर था, आवाजों का 'गो कोरोना गो'। टीवी से लेकर अखबार तक शहर से लेकर गांव तक। प्रधानमंत्री मोदी के एक आह्वान ने विज्ञान के सारे तर्क धाराशायी कर दिए। डॉक्टर से लेकर वैज्ञानिक, नेता से लेकर अभिनेता, बस एक ही नाम, एक ही जाप 'मोदी मोदी', 'न भूतो न भविष्यति'।

दूसरी तरफ एक गरीब गुरबा तबका, सड़क, रेल की पटरियों से लेकर पगडंडियों तक कंधे पर छोटे छोटे बच्चे, सामान, हाथों में बुजुर्गों के हाथ थामे, भूख और प्यास को दबाए हुए डरी सहमी हुई शांति से नंगे पांव पुलिस और स्थानीय दबंगों से बचते बचाते पैरों की आवाज को दबाते हुए अपने घर लौटने को आतुर थी। गरीबों की मदद के लिए प्रधानमंत्री मोदी के आह्वान पर पीएम केयर में लोगों ने, जनसंगठनों ने, सरकारी कर्मचारियों ने खुले हाथों से दान किया। राजनीति भी अपने पर चरम थी।

इन्हीं झंझावातों के बीच उत्तर प्रदेश के 2022 विधानसभा के चुनावों की चर्चा की गूंज भी शुरू हुई। चुनाव में राजनीतिक बदलाव के लिए कुछ जन संगठनों के माध्यम से हम लोगों ने पचास ऐसी विधानसभा सीटों का चयन किया जहां भाजपा गठबंधन ने कम अंतर से चुनाव जीता था।

जन संगठनों ने सामूहिक तौर पर अपने कार्यक्षेत्र की विधानसभा में चुनावी अभियान चलाए। सामाजिक कार्यकर्ताओं की टीम ने सामुदायिक प्रभाव वाले व्यक्तियों, पंचायत स्तर पर राजनीति कर रहे व्यक्तियों, धार्मिक प्रमुखों के साथ ही व्यक्तिगत स्तर पर संवाद किया। गांवों, शहरों और कस्बों में डोर टू डोर कैम्पेन चलाया गया। विधानसभा चुनाव में लोगों के साथ जन संपर्क करते हुए आक्सीजन की कमी से मरे अपने लोगों, संबंधियों की चर्चा ज्यादा निकल कर आती थी।

महंगाई, बेरोजगारी जैसे मुद्दों के साथ कोरोना में हुई परेशानी पर लोगों के आक्रोश को देखते हुए ऐसा लग रहा था कि चुनाव में भाजपा की उत्तर प्रदेश में सरकार नहीं बनेगी। कोरोना में हुई लोगों की मौत, किसान आन्दोलन, आम आदमी की रोजी - रोटी के लिए संघर्ष की बात हर जगह हर समय हर चट्टी और चौराहे पर थी, लोग की बातें और व्यवहार से राजनैतिक बदलाव की दशा संभव लग रही थी।

हम लोगों की टीम ने कांग्रेस, सपा और बसपा के राज्य पदाधिकारियों के साथ बैठके भी की। लखनऊ में सामाजिक क्षेत्र से जुड़े जन संगठनों की एक दिवसीय बैठक आयोजित की गई, जिसमें मैनिफेस्टो को कांग्रेस और सपा के पदाधिकारियों को सौंपा गया। टीम के द्वारा प्रयास किया गया कि एक साथ गठबंधन हो सके, परंतु संभव नहीं हो पाया।

लेकिन दस मार्च २०२२ को आये नतीजों ने सभी तथ्यों को नकारते हुए भाजपा की योगी सरकार को पुनह सत्ता में वापसी करा दिया। चुनाव के बाद साथियों के साथ समीक्षा बैठक में और संवाद से यह अनुभव हुआ की मुद्दे पर सामाजिक आंदोलनों में आने वाले लोग वोट करते समय सिर्फ मुद्दा ही नहीं देखते, जाति, धर्म जैसे मुद्दे वोट का प्रमुख कारण बन जाते हैं।

मतदान के दौरान लोगों का राजनैतिक मूल्यांकन भी आवश्यक है, मुद्दों की चर्चा पर नाराजगी अलग है और अंतिम समय पर वोट डालते समय निर्णय लेने का नजरिया अलग है। इस तथ्य को समझने में हमलोग चुक गए। कुछ समय के लिए ऐसा लग रहा था की जनता को मुद्दे से कोई फर्क नहीं पड़ता, मोदी और योगी का जादू बरकार है। लोग कोरोना में हुए अपनों की मौत को भूल गए हैं, पांच किलो राशन संविधान बचाओ के मुद्दे पर भारी पड़ रहा है।

उत्तर प्रदेश डेमोक्रेटिक यूथ फ्रंट की बैठक में यह निर्णय लिया गया की पूर्वांचल के जिलों में हम लोग लगातार काम करेंगे। इसके लिए संवैधानिक मूल्यों पर जागरूकता और नागरिक अधिकारों के लिए ग्रामीण स्तर पर कार्य शुरू किया गया। इसमें संविधान यात्रा, गोष्ठी, लोगों को कल्याणकारी योजनाओं से जोड़ना आदि कार्यक्रम प्रारम्भ हुआ। अपने स्वयं के अन्दर राजनीतिक समझ विकसित करने के लिए मैंने इन्डियन स्कुल ऑफ़ डेमोक्रेसी का 'द गुड पोलिटिशियन' कार्यक्रम ज्वाइन किया।

सामाजिक मुद्दों में आने वाले जन समर्थन को वोट में बदलने, बूथ लेबल रणनीति बनाने और उस पर कार्य करने की समझ बनी। उत्तर प्रदेश डेमोक्रेटिक यूथ फ्रंट के अन्य साथियों के साथ ISD और संस्थानों से सामाजिक, राजनीतिक समझ और रणनीति बनाने की प्रक्रिया में प्रशिक्षण और संवाद चलता रहा। मे ISD के माध्यम से मेंढा लेखा और अन्य सथानों, संस्थानों में की गई विजिट और सामाजिक, आर्थिक और राजनैतिक बदलाव के लिए कार्य कर रहे व्यक्तियों से संवाद से यह समझ बनी कि राजनीति से केवल सत्ता परिवर्तन हो सकता है व्यवस्था परिवर्तन नहीं।



राजनैतिक बदलाव के लिए हार की वजहों को तलाशते हुए लोगों से संवाद से यह एक गैप निकला जिसमें एक बड़ा तबका यह मान रहा था कि कोई ऐसा नेतृत्व राष्ट्रीय स्तर पर नहीं दिख रहा है जो लोगों की मुलभूत समस्याओं की लड़ाई लड़ता हुआ दिख रहा हो। कोई ऐसा नेतृत्व नहीं है जो भारत के आम आदमी से जुड़ा हुआ हो। प्रदेशों के स्तर पर कई राज्यों में नेतृत्व तो मौजूद थे परन्तु देश स्तर पर कोई ऐसा नेतृत्व लोगों को नहीं दिख था जिसे सभी क्षेत्रीय दल और उनके कोर मतदाता भी अपना नेता स्वीकार करे।

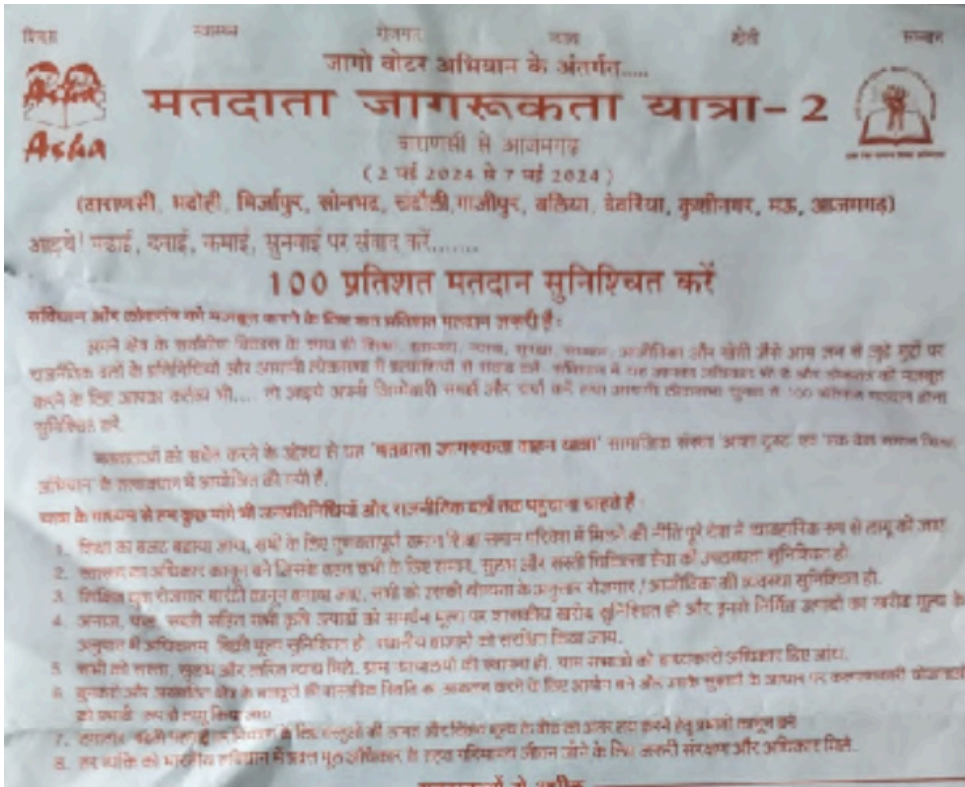
इसी दौर में भारत जोड़ो यात्रा ने इस विकल्प की नींव रखी। भारत जोड़ो यात्रा का उद्देश्य चाहे कुछ भी रहा हो परन्तु उसकी शुरुवात में भाजपा द्वारा मुद्दा विहीन ट्रोल ने राहुल गाँधी और भारत जोड़ो यात्रा की तरफ लोगों का ध्यान आकर्षित किया और मुख्य मिडिया में स्थान दिलाने का मजबूत कार्य किया।

यात्रा से लोगों में केन्द्रीय नेतृत्व की आश उत्पन्न होने लगी, इसी बीच भारत जोड़ो यात्रा के दौरान ही संघ की खाकी पेंट में आग लगी तस्वीर ने मोदी सरकार के खिलाफ की चल रही राजनैतिक लड़ाई में संघ के खिलाफ भी एक मोर्चा खोल दिया। भारत जोड़ो यात्रा देश की सामाजिक आर्थिक और राजनैतिक लड़ाई की तरफ बढ़ रही थी, भारत जोड़ो यात्रा भारत जोड़ो अभियान की तरफ बढ़ गई।

कर्नाटक के चुनाव परिणामो ने इसे संजीवनी दिया। लेकिन मध्य प्रदेश, राजस्थान और छत्तीसगढ़ विधान सभा की हार ने इस पर सवाल भी उठाये, लेकिन यह यात्रा अब लोगो के अन्दर सवाल उठाने और मोदी की नीतियों पर पुनर्विचार करने की सोच को जन्म दे चुकी थी खासकर मोदी मैजिक के शिकार लोग भी धर्म के बाद रोटी रोजगार सवाल पर मोदी को फेल मानने लगे।

भारत जोड़ी अभियान ने इण्डिया गठबंधन के रास्ते को प्रशस्त किया, यह राजनैतिक हालातो को बदलने के लिए अंको के हिसाब से एक मजबूत गठबंधन था। कार्यकर्ताओं के व्यावहार और आवाजो में मजबूती दिखने लगी। राजनैतिक फायदे और सत्ता के हिसाब से इण्डिया गठबंधन का ताना बाना चलता रहा। भारत जोड़ी अभियान के अंतर्गत उत्तर प्रदेश में प्रारम्भिक चरण में वोटो को प्रभावित करने वाले व्यक्तियों, संगठनो ,धर्म गुरुओ, लोगो के साथ संवाद और बैठकों में वोटर लिस्ट में नाम जुडवाने तथा मतदाता सूची के प्रति जागरूकता का विषय प्रमुख था।

लखनऊ में अल्पसंख्यक धर्मगुरुओ और प्रभावशाली व्यक्तियों के साथ एक दिवसीय बैठक में मतदाता जागरूकता और सौ प्रतिशत मतदान अभियान पर चर्चा की गई। सोसल मिडिया में साथियों को बेहतर कार्य करने के लिए पूर्वांचल के जौनपुर में दो दिवसीय कार्यशाला का आयोजन किया गया। कार्यशाला में सोसल मीडिया के टूल्स के इस्तेमाल से स्थानीय मुद्दों को जनता के बीच में लाने का पर संवाद और प्रशिक्षण हुआ। लोगो के बीच संविधान यात्रा, नुककड़ नाटको आदि के माध्यम से मतदान जागरूकता और मुद्दों पर मतदान करने के लिए अभियान चलाये गए। बूथ को मजबूत करने के लिए एक बूथ 5 यूथ अभियान चलाया जा रहा है।



ये मुहीम आगे बढ़ रही थी और उत्तर प्रदेश में बदलाव की चुनौती को स्वीकार करके कार्यक्रम चल रहे थे तभी समाजवादी पार्टी के साथ कमलनाथ जी के विवादित बयान फिर उत्तर प्रदेश कांग्रेस के प्रदेश अध्यक्ष अजय राय के बयान, अखिलेश यादव के अजय राय पर बयान और फिर उस पर अजय राय की प्रतिक्रिया ने जमीन पर भारत जोड़ी अभियान के साथियों के साथ ही समाजवादी पार्टी और कांग्रेस के वो कार्यकर्ता जिन्हें लग रहा था की मिलकर उत्तर प्रदेश में मोदी को चालीस सीटो से भी कम पर रोका जा सकता है उनमे हताशा पैदा कर रही थी। अब यह सन्देश साफ़ आने लगा की जो उम्मीद सत्ता परिवर्तन की दिख रही थी, वह टूट रहा है। इसी बीच भारत जोड़ी अभियान में इस उठापटक के बीच भारत जोड़ी न्याय यात्रा का प्रारम्भ हो गई।

इस न्याय यात्रा के शुरुआत से ही राजनैतिक स्थिति या तेजी बदलने लगी, रही सही कसर इण्डिया गठबंधन के सूत्रधार नितीश कुमार एनडीए में शामिल हो गए। ये एक ऐसी खबर थी जिसने हम लोगो को बहुत प्रभावित किया, उस समय व्यक्तिगत तौर पर संबल बनाये रखने का मुश्किल समय था।

साथियों से संवाद में यह तय किया गया की हम लोग मतदाता सूची और जागरूकता का अपना कार्य जारी रखेंगे। एक मुश्किल दौर था जिसमे भारत जोड़ी अभियान से जुड़े कुछ साथियो ने भी यह कहना भी शुरू कर दिया की अब उत्तर प्रदेश में कुछ नहीं हो सकता।

इन्हीं झंझावातों के बीच उत्तर प्रदेश में पल्लवी पटेल, स्वामी प्रसाद मौर्या जैसे लोग अलग गुट बनाने में जुटे रहे। बहन मायावती की जमीन पर निष्क्रियता दलित वोटों को भर्मित कर रही थी। इन्हीं सब के बीच भारत जोड़ो न्याय यात्रा में मैं भी छत्तीसगढ़, झारखंड, बिहार और उत्तर प्रदेश की यात्रा में शामिल हो गया। यात्रा में हो रहे जन संपर्क में संवाद एक अलग ही सन्देश दे रहे थे।

यात्रा के दौरान जो आम आदमी की भीड़ आ रही थी वो स्वतः आ रही थी। नौकरी को लेकर युवाओं का जमावड़ा, महंगाई और किसानों के मुद्दों पर लोगों की आपस में कानाफूसी कुछ अलग ही सुर कह रहे थे बाहरी लोगों से कुछ और बोल रहे थे और परन्तु उनकी आपस की बातचीत में कुछ अलग ही सन्देश था। ऐसा लग रहा था की आवाम भी अपने राजनीति के सुर बदल रही थी। लोगों की चुप्पी कुछ अलग थी। इसे ही राजनीति में शायद अंडर करंट कहा जाता है।

महिलाओं से संवाद में महंगाई से अधिक रोजगार और शिक्षा पर चिंता अधिक दिखती थी। उत्तर प्रदेश में रोडवेज से बाराबंकी लोकसभा की यात्रा में बगल की सीट पर महिलाओं का आपस में चल रहे वार्तालाप में इसका सन्देश बड़ी स्पष्ट था वो कह थी की 'मनई दिन रात सुबह शाम दौड़ रहे है और भर्ती नहीं आ रही है जो आती है वह भी कुछ दिन बाद रुक जाती है, पता न भगवान क्या करेंगे।'

एक दूसरी घटना में महिलाओं के साथ बैठक में महिला ने कहा की सरकारी स्कूलों में पढ़ाई एक दम नहीं हो रही है जिसके पास पैसा है वह तो निजी स्कूलों में पढ़ाई कर ले रहा परन्तु गरीब क्या करे। पांच किलो राशन से परिवार थोड़े चलेगा।' सरकार बस बड़े लोगों की राहुल गाँधी सही कह रहा है, इ सब प्राइवेट कर देगा।'

फैजाबाद लोकसभा में अयोध्या में सरयू के किनारे ठेले और खोमचे वालों से आमदनी पर सम्वाद में उनका कहना था की हर महीने बहुत सारे मंत्री और अधिकारियों की जाँच के लिए आ रहे है, जब भी यह आते है तो हम लोगों को पुलिस वाले आकर ठेला लगाने को मना कर देते है सफाई के नाम रोज परेशान किया जा रहा है। महीने में आठ दस दिन तो काम बंद ही रहता है।

आमदनी कम हो गई है। सड़कों के चौड़ीकरण के नाम पर मकान और दुकानों को ध्वस्त कर दिया गया, भाजपा और संघ से जुड़े लोग भी जिनके मकानों पर बुलडोजर चला था और उचित मुआवजा भी नहीं मिला काफी नाराज थे परन्तु खुलकर नहीं बोल रहे थे।

संत समाज के साथ बैठकों में भी सरकार के प्रति नाराजगी दिखी परन्तु हर मठ और संत घरानों को निर्माण के लिए मिली लाखों में सहयोग धनराशी थोड़ी नाराजगी को कम रही थी। सीतापुर, जौनपुर, मछलीशहर, केसरगंज, डुमरियागंज, बांसगांव, गोरखपुर, गाजीपुर, बलिया, घोसी, सलेमपुर, चंदौली और भदोही आदि लोकसभा में उत्तर प्रदेश डेमोक्रेटिक यूथ फ्रंट, जमाते इस्लामी हिन्द जैसे संगठनों के साथियों के माध्यम से हुई बैठकों में स्थानीय मुद्दों के साथ बेरोजगारी और महंगाई को सोशल मिडिया के माध्यम से लोगों के बीच रखना, बूथ पर काम करने, लोगों को घरों से मतदान स्थल तक पहुंचाने और मतदान प्रतिशत बढ़ाने के लिए एक बूथ 5 यूथ की रणनीति पर संवाद किया गया।

प्रत्येक बैठक में ऐसा लगा की लोगों अपेक्षाएं, उम्मीदें और मुद्दों पर सहमति राहुल गाँधी से ज्यादा थी। उत्तर प्रदेश में कांग्रेस की स्थिति से लोग दुखी थे, उनका कहना था की जमीनी स्तर पर कांग्रेस को कैडर बनाने का काम करना चाहिए। एक अकेला राहुल ही लड़ रहा है, मोदी से भी और पार्टी के अन्दर भी।

भारत जोड़ो न्याय यात्रा में राहुल गांधी की लगातार हर मंच पर जाति जनगणना और आरक्षण, संसाधनों का बटवारा, सरकार द्वारा संसाधनों पर अदानी और अम्बानी को छुट, उद्योगपतियों को कर्ज माफ़ी, संविधान संरक्षण जैसे मुद्दों पर लगातार हमला क्षेत्रीय दलों के कोर वोटर्स के अन्दर भी धीरे धीरे राहुल गांधी के नेतृत्व विकसित कर रहा था।

दलित, पिछड़ी, अल्पसंख्यक, गरीब और युवा सभी वर्ग एक साइलेंट तरीके से राहुल गाँधी को सुन रहे थे, उस पर चर्चा कर रहे थे, फारवर्ड कर रहे थे। एक गैप जो केन्द्रीय नेतृत्व से इस तरह की अपेक्षा कर रहा था वह भर रहा था और मुद्दों पर इंडिया गठबंधन के मतदाताओं को जोड़ रहा था।

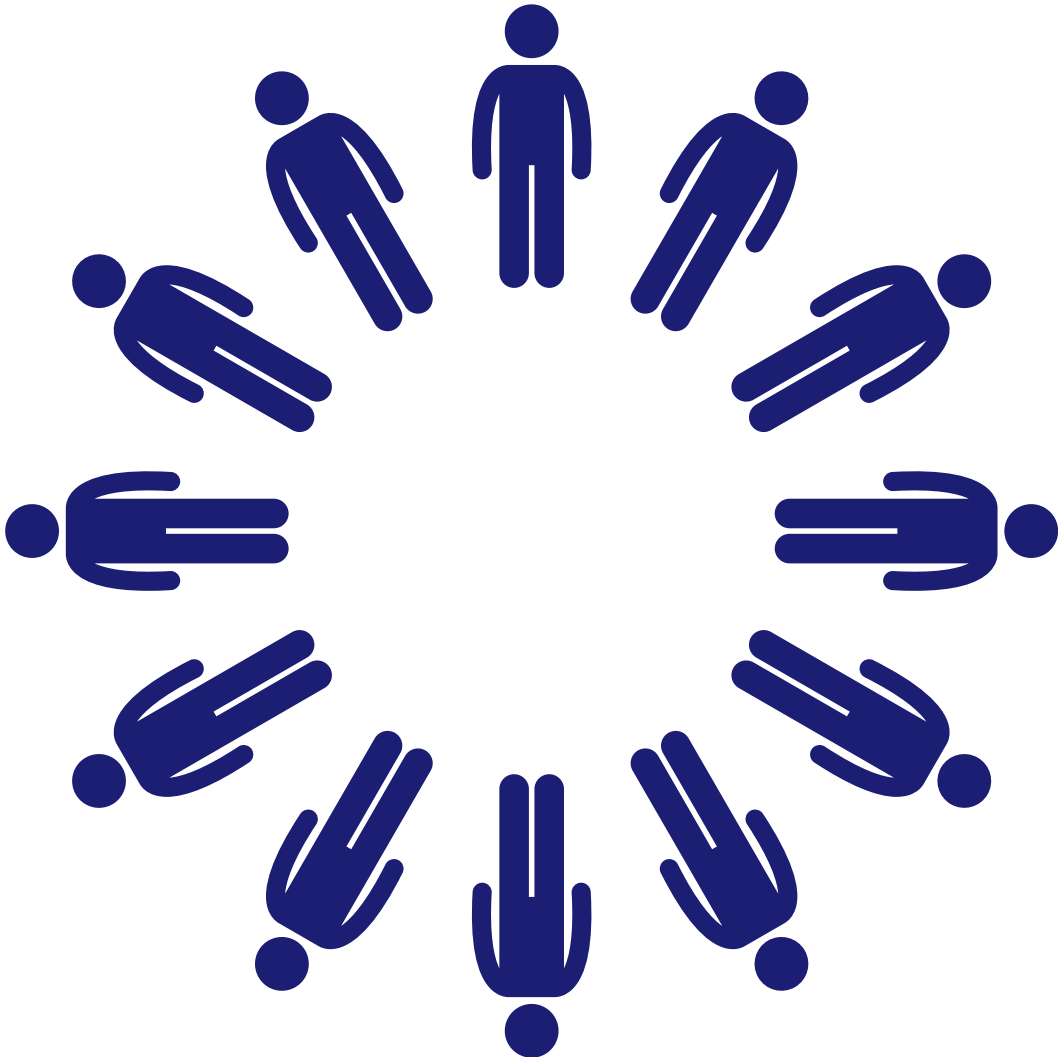
मोदी मैजिक में जिस तरह मोदी के भक्त सिर्फ मोदी देखते है, वही कार्य मुद्दों के समर्थकों को राहुल गांधी से मिल रहा था। भारत जोड़ो यात्रा और भारत जोड़ो न्याय यात्रा ने व्यक्तिगत रूप से लोगों प्रभावित किया, इसका उदाहरण प्रधानमंत्री को लेकर सीएसडीएस सर्वे है जिसमें उत्तर प्रदेश में प्रधानमंत्री के तौर पर राहुल गांधी को छत्तीस प्रतिशत और नरेंद्र मोदी को बत्तीस प्रतिशत लोगों ने पसंद बताया।

भारत जोड़ो अभियान से जुड़े साथियों का मानना है की अभी उत्तर प्रदेश में इस अभियान को लगातार काम करने की आवश्यकता है सिर्फ राजनैतिक परिवर्तन के लिए ही नहीं बल्कि व्यवस्था परिवर्तन के लिए।

इसके लिए यह भी आवश्यक है की इस अभियान के नाम पर पुनराविचार हो। भारत जोड़ो अभियान आम जनमानस में कांग्रेस के लिए कार्य करने वाली इकाई के रूप में देखि जा रही है, इसलिए इस नाम के साथ काम करने पर आम जनमानस को व्यवस्था परिवर्तन के मतदान करने के कार्य में दिक्कत होगी। लोग इसे राजनीति से जोड़ देंगे। व्यवस्था परिवर्तन तभी संभव है जब सभी विचार के लोग एक साथ मुद्दे पर मतदान करेंगे।

विकास में प्राकृतिक न्याय, सामाजिक न्याय, आर्थिक और राजनैतिक न्याय की समझ विकसित हो, इसके लिए नागरिक अधिकारों पर जागरूकता कार्यक्रम की आवश्यकता है। स्थानीय मुद्दे पर कार्य करने के लिए साथियों को प्रशिक्षण कार्यक्रम, कार्यक्रमों के संचालन हेतु संसाधनों के लिए आवश्यक है की स्थानीय स्तर पर आजीविका के विकल्प तैयार किये जाए।

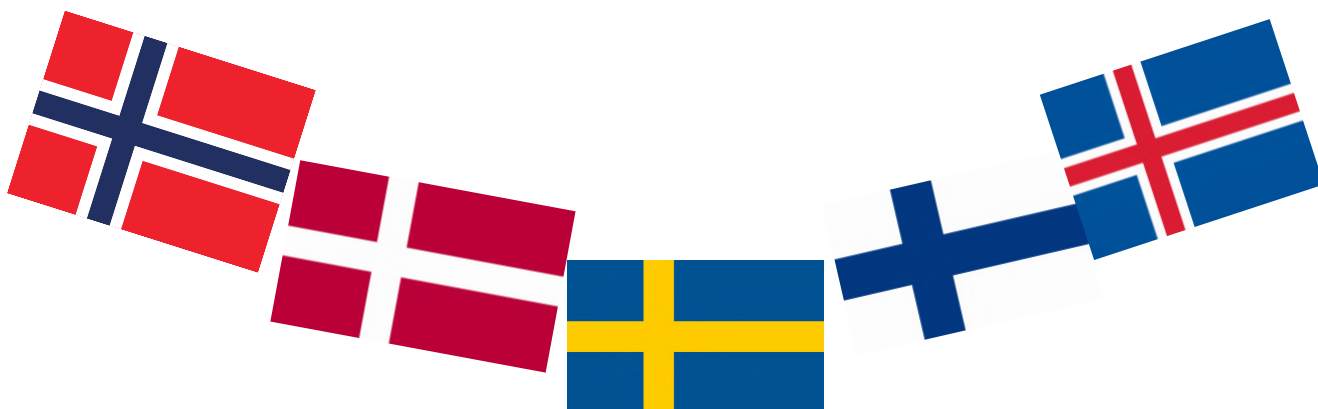
ग्राम स्तर पर युवाओ को खेलो से जोड़ा जाए। हर गाँव में एक पुस्तकालय की स्थापना की जाए जो उसी गाँव के लोगो द्वारा संचालित किया जाए। लोगो में सामाजिक, आर्थिक और राजनैतिक समझ विकसित करने के लिए कार्यक्रम विकसित किये जाए। वर्तमान राजनीति लोगो के अन्दर धर्म, जाति आदि के आधार पर द्वेष पैदा कर रही इसलिए सामाजिक और सांस्कृतिक परिवर्तन के लिए युवा शिविर लगाये जाए। लक्षित समूह के रूप में महिलाएँ और युवाओ को रखा जाए।



## 6. The Nordic Exceptionalism: What explains why the Nordic countries are constantly among the happiest in the world

---

*Frank Martela, Bent Greve, Bo Rothstein, Juho Saari*<sup>3</sup>



### 6.1 Introduction

From 2013 until today, every time the World Happiness Report (WHR) has published its annual ranking of countries, the five Nordic countries – Finland, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, and Iceland – have all been in the top ten, with Nordic countries occupying the top three spots in 2017, 2018, and 2019. Clearly, when it comes to the level of average life evaluations, the Nordic states are doing something right, but Nordic exceptionalism isn't confined to citizen's happiness. No matter whether we look at the state of democracy and political rights, lack of corruption, trust between citizens, felt safety, social cohesion, gender equality, equal distribution of incomes, Human Development Index, or many other global comparisons, one tends to find the Nordic countries in the global top spots.[\[1\]](#)

What exactly makes Nordic citizens so exceptionally satisfied with their lives? This is the question that this chapter aims to answer. Through reviewing the existing studies, theories, and data behind the World Happiness Report, we find that the most prominent explanations include factors related to the quality of institutions, such as reliable and extensive welfare benefits, low corruption, and well-functioning democracy and state institutions.

---

<sup>3</sup> Reproduced from the World Happiness Report, 2020



Furthermore, Nordic citizens experience a high sense of autonomy and freedom, as well as high levels of social trust towards each other, which play an important role in determining life satisfaction. On the other hand, we show that a few popular explanations for Nordic happiness such as the small population and homogeneity of the Nordic countries, and a few counterarguments against Nordic happiness such as the cold weather and the suicide rates, actually don't seem to have much to do with Nordic happiness.

Most of the potential explanatory factors for Nordic happiness are highly correlated with each other and often also mutually reinforcing, making it hard to disentangle cause from effect. Therefore, focusing on just a single explanation may result in distorted interpretations. For example, does trust in institutions and other citizens create a fertile ground for building a welfare state model with extensive social benefits? Or does the welfare state model contribute to low crime and corruption, which leads citizens to trust each other more?

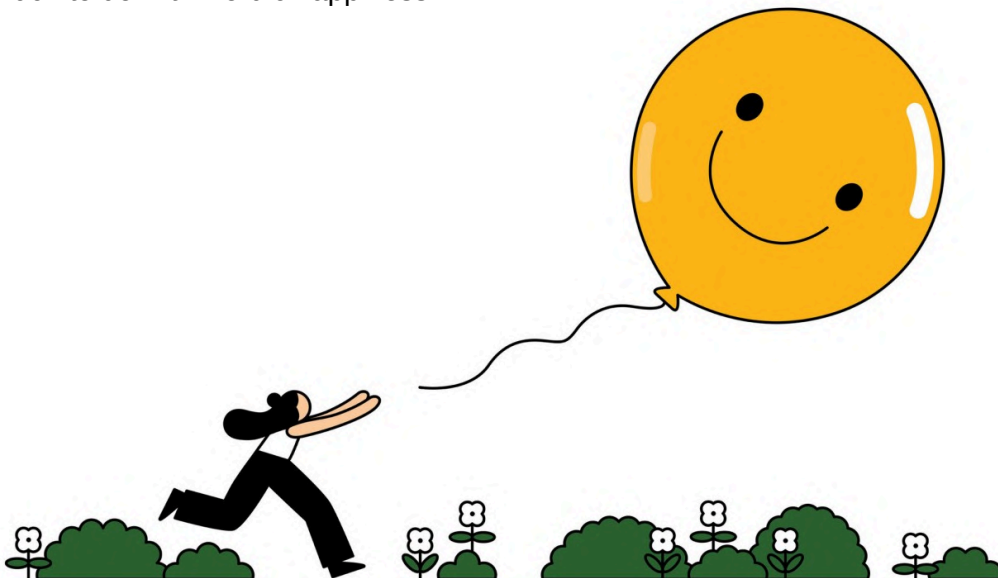
Most likely, both directions of influence play a role, leading to a self-reinforcing feedback loop that produces high levels of trust in the Nordic region, and a high-functioning state and society model. We seek insight on this by taking a brief look at the history of the Nordic countries, which helps us to identify some practical takeaways about what other countries could learn from the Nordic region to ignite a positive feedback loop and enhance the happiness of their citizens. As Thomas Jefferson noted in 1809, "The care of human life and happiness and not their destruction is the first and only legitimate object of good government."<sup>[2]</sup>

## 6.2 Review of existing explanations

Many theories have been put forth to explain the high level of Nordic happiness, from successful modernization<sup>[3]</sup> and the ability to support better the less well off,<sup>[4]</sup> to high levels of social capital.<sup>[5]</sup> Here we review the most prominent theories to see the strength of their explanatory power as regards Nordic happiness. After having reviewed each explanation individually in this section, we turn to the more difficult question of how these factors are linked together, as there are crucial interlinks and feedback mechanisms between them.

### 6.2.1 Weather, smallness, homogeneity, and suicides - Dispelling four myths contradicting the idea of Nordic happiness

Before turning to what we see as the most probable explanations for Nordic happiness, we will dispel some myths that challenge Nordic happiness by discussing a few factors sometimes raised in popular press that in fact don't have much to do with Nordic happiness.



[Source: Image](#)

First, it is true that the Nordic countries do not have the pleasant tropical weather that popular images often associate with happiness; rather, the Nordic winter tends to be long, dark, and cold. It is true that people account for changes in weather in their evaluations of life satisfaction, with too hot, too cold, and too rainy weather decreasing life satisfaction. However, effect sizes for changes in weather tend to be small, and are complicated by people's expectations and seasonal patterns.

For example, people in the tropics are found to be happier during winter but less happy during spring, as compared to people in more temperate zones.<sup>[6]</sup> Average weather is something people adapt to and thus typically doesn't much affect the life satisfaction of those used to a given weather. Accordingly, although the warming of the weather due to climate change could slightly increase the life satisfaction of people living in cold countries such as the Nordic countries,<sup>[7]</sup> based on current evidence, weather probably doesn't play a major role in increasing or decreasing Nordic happiness.

Second, there is a myth that in addition to high happiness metrics, the Nordic countries have high suicide rates, a seeming paradox. However, even though the Nordic countries, especially Finland, used to have relatively high suicide rates in the 1970s and 1980s, these rates have declined sharply since those days, and nowadays the reported suicide rates in the Nordic countries are close to the European average, and are also similar to rates in France, Germany, and the United States, for example.<sup>[8]</sup>

Although wealthy countries, such as the Nordics, tend to have higher suicide rates than poorer countries,<sup>[9]</sup> in general, the same factors that predict higher life satisfaction tend to predict lower suicide rates. For example, higher national levels of social capital and quality of government predict both higher subjective well-being and lower suicide rates, while higher divorce rates predict more suicides and lower life satisfaction – although quality of government seems to have a bigger effects on life satisfaction and divorces on suicide.<sup>[10]</sup>

Thus this seeming paradox seems to be based on outdated information,<sup>[11]</sup> as Nordic suicide rates are not especially high and are well predicted by the theoretical models where the same factors contribute to both higher life satisfaction in the Nordics and to lower suicide rates.

Third, it is often suggested that it is easier to build welfare societies in small and homogenous countries such as the Nordics, compared to larger and more diverse countries. However, research has not found a relationship, either negative or positive, between the size of a country's population and life satisfaction. In addition, smaller countries on average are not more homogenous than larger countries.<sup>[12]</sup>

In fact, today the Nordic countries are actually quite heterogenous, with some 19 % of the population of Sweden being born outside the country. Some empirical studies have found that increased ethnic diversity is associated with reduced trust. This is attributed to ethnically diverse societies having more difficulty generating and sharing public goods, but Eric Uslaner shows that it is not ethnic diversity per se, but rather ethnic residential segregation that undermines trust.<sup>[13]</sup>

Corroborating this, other research has demonstrated that the economic inequality between ethnic groups, rather than cultural or linguistic barriers, seems to explain this effect of ethnic diversification leading to less public goods.<sup>[14]</sup> Thus the historical fact that the Nordic countries have not had an underclass of slaves or cheap labor imported from colonies could play some role in explaining the Nordic path to welfare societies.

Furthermore, Charron & Rothstein<sup>[15]</sup> show that the effect of ethnic diversity on social trust becomes negligible when controlling for quality of government, indicating that in countries of high-quality institutions such as the Nordic countries, ethnic diversity might not have any effect on social trust.

Furthermore, according to the analysis in World Happiness Report 2018, the ratio of immigrants within a country has no effect on the average level of happiness of those locally born, with the ten happiest countries having foreign-born population shares averaging 17.2 %, about twice as much as the world average.[\[16\]](#) Other studies have tended to find a small positive rather than negative effect of immigration on the well-being of locally born populations.[\[17\]](#) Ethnic homogeneity thus provides no explanation of Nordic happiness.

Also, immigrants within a country tend to be about as happy as people born locally.[\[18\]](#) As we argue later, quality of governmental institutions play a big part of Nordic happiness and these institutions serve all people living within the country, including immigrants. This is a probable explanation for the high ranking of the Nordics in the comparison of happiness of foreign-born people in various countries, in which Finland, Denmark, Norway, and Iceland occupy the top four spots, with Sweden seventh globally.[\[19\]](#) The well-being advantage of the Nordic countries thus extends also to those immigrating to these countries.

### 6.2.2 Welfare state generosity

Given that the Nordic countries are renowned for their welfare-state model with extensive social benefits, a natural candidate to explain Nordic happiness is the welfare state. Early analyses quantifying welfare as an aggregate measure of government welfare spending, like the percentage of GDP devoted to public welfare programs, tended to find no link between welfare expenditure and happiness, or even a negatively-correlated link.[\[20\]](#)

Government spending as such thus seems not to be clearly linked to greater or worse life satisfaction, which is no surprise given that government spending is tightly linked to economic cycles and demographic changes, rather than an adequate measure for tracking the distribution and redistribution of goods and services. More recent work has tended to operationalize the welfare state in terms of the *benefits (in-kind and in-cash)* offered to citizens rather than mere *spending as proportion of GDP*, because the latter does not tell what the state actually provides for its citizens.

In a longitudinal study of 18 industrial countries from 1971-2002, Pacek and Radcliff examine welfare state generosity by using an index capturing the extent of emancipation from market dependency in terms of pensions, income maintenance for the ill or disabled, and unemployment benefits, finding that welfare state generosity exerts a positive and significant impact on life satisfaction.[\[21\]](#)



[Source: Image](#)

Another study that examined OECD countries found that indicators such as the extensiveness of welfare benefits and degree of labor market regulation had a significant positive association with life satisfaction.<sup>[22]</sup> This study also found that this effect is not moderated by people's income, meaning that both poor and rich individuals and households benefit from more extensive government. Income security in case of unemployment plays a strong role in determining life satisfaction, as both unemployment and fear of unemployment strongly affect quality of life.<sup>[23]</sup>

Furthermore, using Gallup World Poll data, Oishi et al. demonstrate that the positive link between progressive taxation and global life evaluation is fully mediated by citizens' satisfaction with public and common goods such as health care, education, and public transportation that the progressive taxation helps to fund.<sup>[24]</sup> These and other studies<sup>[25]</sup> suggest that one secret to Nordic happiness is the institutional framework of the Nordic welfare state. People tend to be happier in countries where there is easy access to relatively generous welfare benefits, and where the labor market is regulated to avoid employee exploitation.<sup>[26]</sup>

### 6.2.3 Institutional quality



*Source: Image*

Quality of government is another key explanation often provided for the high life satisfaction of Nordic countries, because in comparisons of institutional quality, the Nordic countries occupy the top spots along with countries such as New Zealand and Switzerland.<sup>[27]</sup> Indeed, several studies have shown that people are more satisfied with their lives in countries that have better institutional quality.<sup>[28]</sup>

While most of the evidence is cross-sectional, Helliwell et al. examined changes in government quality in 157 countries over the years 2005-2012, finding that improvements in quality tend to lead to improvements in well-being.<sup>[29]</sup> Moreover, as regards changes in well-being, changes in government quality explained as much as changes in GDP.

Typically, government quality has been divided into two dimensions: democratic quality and delivery quality.<sup>[30]</sup> The first is about the access to power including factors such as the ability to participate in selecting the government, freedom of expression, freedom of association, and political stability. The latter is about the exercise of power, including the rule of law, control of corruption, regulatory quality, and government effectiveness.

These dimensions are typically deeply embedded into institutional practices of a given country, thereby promoting continuity and stabilizing people's expectations. Studies have tended to find that it is the latter type of government quality, delivery quality, that is more strongly related to citizen happiness. However, in countries with high delivery quality, such as the Nordic countries, the quality of democracy plays an increasingly strong role in further explaining citizen life satisfaction.[\[31\]](#)

These studies demonstrate that the quality of the government and public institutions matter for life satisfaction. The Nordic countries tend to occupy the top spots in international comparisons of government quality, which helps to explain the high life satisfaction in these countries.

#### **6.2.4 Income inequality**

The Nordic countries are also famous for low levels of income inequality, but the evidence is not clear that a lack of income inequality is a potential explanation for high life satisfaction. Zagorski et al., for example, in their examination of 28 European countries, found that while inequality is negatively correlated with average life satisfaction, this effect disappears completely when controlled for GDP per capita.[\[32\]](#)

This conclusion is supported by other research that similarly found no link between income inequality and well-being, while there are also studies that have found both negative and positive correlations between inequality and well-being.[\[33\]](#)

The range of results from positive to negative to no connection suggest that no clear link exists between income inequality and well-being. Instead, this connection is sensitive to the inclusion of various covariates.

However, if inequality leads to lower levels of perceived fairness and trust, and high levels of status anxiety and lack of economic and social opportunities, these factors might more directly contribute to a lower life satisfaction in the nation.[\[34\]](#)

Furthermore, living in a highly-developed welfare state seems to have an impact on people's perceptions of the acceptance of income inequality.[\[35\]](#) More particularly, Europeans prefer more equal societies, and inequality has a negative relation with happiness, especially among the poor in Europe.[\[36\]](#) Thus, low levels of inequality might be important for the happiness of Nordic citizens, even though the same direct effect is not visible in many other countries.

#### **6.2.5 Freedom to make life choices**

Autonomy and the freedom to make life choices are known to be connected to subjective well-being.[\[37\]](#) For example, a study of 63 countries showed that the degree to which autonomy and individualism were valued in those countries was a more consistent predictor of well-being (measured with anxiety, burnout, and general health) than national wealth.[\[38\]](#)

Accordingly, the extent to which a country is able to provide individuals a sense of agency, freedom, and autonomy plays a significant role in explaining citizen happiness.[\[39\]](#) Using World Values Survey data from 1981 to 2007, Inglehart et al. showed that rises in national levels of sense of free choice were associated with similar rises in national levels of subjective well-being, with change in free choice explaining about 30% of the change over time in subjective well-being.[\[40\]](#)

Other research has also demonstrated the importance of freedom to make life choices for national levels of happiness.[\[41\]](#)

Inglehart et. al argue and demonstrate in their data that this sense of freedom is the result of three factors that feed into each other including material prosperity that liberates people from scarcity, democratic political institutions that liberate people from political oppression, and more tolerant and liberal cultural values that give people more room to express themselves and their unique identity.[42]

For Inglehart, the Nordic countries constitute “the leading example of successful modernization, maximizing prosperity, social solidarity, and political and personal freedom.”[43] Thus the high sense of autonomy and freedom – and the resulting high well-being – that Nordic citizens experience can be attributed to relatively high material prosperity combined with well-functioning democracy and liberal values that prevail in the Nordic countries.

### 6.2.6 Trust in other people and social cohesion



*Source: Image*

Trust in other people has also been linked to citizen happiness. Several studies have demonstrated that various measures of social or horizontal trust are robustly correlated with life satisfaction, and that this relation holds even when controlling for factors such as Gross National Income per capita.[44] The most commonly used measure of generalized trust asks about whether most people can be trusted.

Other measures of trust, such as whether people believe that a lost wallet will be returned to its owner, have been shown to be correlated with life satisfaction, as well.[45] In addition to between-country evidence, Helliwell et al. show using European Social Survey data that within-country changes in social trust are linked to significant changes in national levels of subjective well-being.[46] High levels of social trust also seem to make people’s well-being more resilient to various national crises.[47]

Furthermore, it has been argued that social cohesion, which is a broader notion than generalized trust, predicts well-being. In a recent study, Delhey and Dragolov defined social cohesion as having three dimensions including connectedness to other people, having good social relations, and having a focus on the common good.

They found that both the aggregate level of social cohesion as well as each of the three dimensions individually were associated with higher well-being in a sample of 27 European Union countries.[48] The three Nordic countries included in the analysis – Denmark, Finland, and Sweden – occupy the top three positions in their index of social cohesion, making trust and social cohesion one additional explanation for the Nordic happiness.

## 6.2.7 Other explanations

The explanations of Nordic happiness mentioned in the review above are by no means an exhaustive list. Many other factors can be used to try to explain Nordic happiness. For example, economic insecurity and vulnerability to economic losses are detrimental for well-being. The Nordic countries, due to the extensive welfare benefits, are better able to make their citizens less vulnerable to economic insecurity than other countries.[\[49\]](#)

Research has also consistently shown that social comparisons matter for well-being. In assessing how good their lives are, humans often compare their own lives to the lives of those around them. This makes people's subjective perception of their position in society more predictive of well-being than objective measures such as income.[\[50\]](#) However, this effect is moderated by the welfare state, because in Nordic countries with strong welfare states, people's perceptions of their position in society have less influence on their own happiness than in other countries.[\[51\]](#)

This is corroborated by findings according to which status anxiety, defined as the fear of failing to conform to the ideals of success laid down by society, tends to be lower in Nordic countries compared to most other countries measured.[\[52\]](#) The ethos of equality, manifested in universal public services that reduce social and economic risks, thus seems to be visible in and reinforced through a more egalitarian culture, as well.

Furthermore, a comparison of United States and Denmark shows that the favorable difference in happiness for the Danes was particularly pronounced for low income citizens.[\[53\]](#) Being poor in Denmark does not have as harsh effect on happiness than in the US, where the gap between rich and poor is much larger and where there are not similar welfare services and public goods available for the poor. It thus seems possible that keeping up with the Joneses doesn't carry as much weight in Nordic countries as in the US and many other countries.

## 6.3 Examining Nordic countries in WHR data

The *World Happiness Report* tends to use six factors as predictors of life evaluation: GDP per capita, social support, healthy life expectancy, freedom to make life choices, generosity, and corruption. Are the Nordic countries somehow different as regards these six factors? Among these factors, are there some in which the Nordic countries perform especially well, which could explain why Nordic countries are so happy?

To examine this issue, we take a look at the Gallup World Poll data as regards these factors. Given that the Nordic countries are all relatively rich (Nordic countries occupy a range from 6 (Norway) to 21 (Finland) in the 149-country ranking of GDP per capita), we are especially interested what factors beyond GDP per capita make the Nordic countries stand out.

For this we compare the ten richest non-Nordic countries – Luxembourg, Singapore, United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, Ireland, Switzerland, Hong Kong, United States, and the Netherlands – with the five Nordic countries as regards the six predictors. This allows us to consider how the Nordic countries are able to produce more happiness than countries that have higher GDP.

Table 7.1 shows that the Netherlands and Switzerland are in essence indistinguishable from the Nordic countries on the examined six factors: GDP per capita, social support, healthy life expectancy, freedom, generosity, and corruption. The Netherlands and Switzerland, along with the Nordic countries, rank high not only in life satisfaction, but also in social support, freedom to make life choices, and lack of corruption.

In fact, the Nordic countries occupy the top positions across the world for social support, and are all in top ten for freedom. For lack of corruption, the Nordic countries are otherwise in the global top ten, but Iceland is surprisingly only 36th. This may reflect a recent banking crisis that revealed major economic and social irregularities among the Icelandic elite, which would make this low position temporary.

As regards generosity, measured by how much people donate money to charity, there is more variability within the Nordic countries, with Finland being below world average and only Iceland making it into the top 10. This result might be specific to charity donations, because the Nordic countries tend to have high scores for comparisons of other types of prosocial behavior such as volunteering.<sup>[54]</sup>

As regards healthy life expectancy, the Nordic countries are found in spots from 13 to 27. This is relatively high, but not best in the world. However, differences between countries are rather small in this variable. Thus, it seems that what unites the Nordic countries as regards these predictors of life satisfaction is high levels of social support, freedom to make life choices, and lack of corruption.

**Table 7.1: The factors influencing happiness in Nordic and richest countries**

**Table 7.1: The factors influencing happiness in Nordic and richest countries**

Country	Life evaluation		Log GDP per capita		Social support		Healthy life expectancy		Freedom		Generosity		Corruption	
	Average	Ranking	Average	Ranking	Average	Ranking	Average	Ranking	Average	Ranking	Average	Ranking	Average	Ranking
Finland	7.77	1	10.61	21	0.96	2	71.80	27	0.95	5	-0.06	91	0.21	4
Denmark	7.60	2	10.75	13	0.95	4	72.10	24	0.95	6	0.10	34	0.18	3
Norway	7.54	3	11.08	6	0.96	3	73.10	13	0.96	3	0.14	23	0.31	8
Iceland	7.49	4	10.72	16	0.98	1	73.00	14	0.94	7	0.27	6	0.69	36
Netherlands	7.49	5	10.79	11	0.93	15	72.20	20	0.92	18	0.21	11	0.39	12
Switzerland	7.48	6	10.96	7	0.94	12	73.80	3	0.93	11	0.12	27	0.31	7
Sweden	7.34	7	10.76	12	0.92	25	72.50	18	0.93	10	0.12	26	0.25	6
Luxembourg	7.09	14	11.46	1	0.92	28	72.60	17	0.89	27	0.01	62	0.36	9
Ireland	7.02	17	11.11	5	0.95	6	72.20	19	0.88	32	0.17	15	0.37	10
United States	6.89	19	10.90	9	0.91	35	68.40	40	0.82	64	0.14	20	0.71	39
United Arab Emirates	6.82	21	11.12	3	0.85	69	66.90	57	0.95	4	0.12	29		–
Saudi Arabia	6.37	28	10.81	10	0.87	61	66.00	74	0.81	65	-0.17	127		–
Singapore	6.26	34	11.34	2	0.91	34	76.50	1	0.92	19	0.13	24	0.10	1
Kuwait	6.06	49	11.12	4	0.84	71	66.30	71	0.85	47	-0.03	78		–
Hong Kong	5.44	75	10.90	8	0.83	75	75.86	2	0.82	57	0.14	21	0.41	14
<b>Nordic average</b>	7.55		10.78		0.95		72.50		0.95		0.12		0.33	
<b>Richest average</b>	6.69		11.05		0.89		71.08		0.88		0.08		0.38	
<b>World average</b>	5.45		9.26		0.81		64.20		0.77		-0.01		0.74	

Source: Calculations based upon data from WHP, 2019

Recently, more attention has been given not only to the average levels of happiness in countries, but the degree of equality of happiness within countries. In other words, is the distribution of happiness narrow in the sense that responses cluster around the same average answer, or wide in the sense that there is a broad range of answers provided to questions about happiness? Some previous research suggests that happiness differences in Nordic countries might be smaller than in other countries<sup>[55]</sup>, and accordingly we examine WHR data to see how equally distributed the happiness scores are in the Nordic countries as compared to the rest of the world. For this, we looked at the coefficients of variation calculated by dividing the standard deviations of life evaluation by the averages of life evaluation in 149 countries using the average of last three years data. We want to compare Nordic scores to global averages and to the scores of the ten richest countries in the world.



**Table 7.2: Coefficient of variation in life evaluation across countries**

Country	Coefficient of variation in life evaluation	Ranking
Netherlands	0.171	1
Finland	0.185	2
Luxembourg	0.196	3
Norway	0.209	4
<b>Nordic average</b>	<b>0.211</b>	
Denmark	0.216	5
Switzerland	0.217	6
Iceland	0.217	7
Belgium	0.219	8
Austria	0.222	9
New Zealand	0.226	10
Sweden	0.227	11
Singapore	0.229	12
Ireland	0.260	21
<b>Richest countries average</b>	<b>0.275</b>	
United States	0.289	26
United Arab Emirates	0.313	32
Hong Kong S.A.R. of China	0.332	43
Saudi Arabia	0.361	51
Kuwait	0.385	65
<b>Global average</b>	<b>0.430</b>	

Source. Calculations based upon data from WHR, 2019

As Table 7.2 shows, all Nordic countries are in the top eleven in the world as regards low levels of variance in life evaluations, well below the global average and the average of the richest countries. This means that there is less inequality in happiness in the Nordic countries and countries such as the Netherlands, Luxembourg, and Switzerland, meaning that people’s happiness scores tend to be closer to one another in these countries compared to other countries in the world.

Of the top ten richest countries in the world, the Netherlands, Luxembourg, and Switzerland rank similarly to Nordic countries in terms of both high life satisfaction and low inequality of life satisfaction scores. In contrast, the other richest countries—the United States, United Arab Emirates, Hong Kong, and especially Saudi Arabia and Kuwait—have a more unequal distribution of happiness, and the average life satisfaction in these countries is lower than in the Nordics.

Finally, it is worth noting that high Nordic happiness levels are dependent on the measure of happiness used. The World Happiness Report and most other international comparisons use general life evaluation as the measure of citizen happiness.

In the WHR, people are asked to make a general evaluation of their life on a Cantril ladder scale from 0 to 10, with the worst possible life as 0 and the best possible life as 10. In these studies, we consistently find the Nordic countries are the happiest in the world.

However, if instead of life satisfaction, we look at the data for the prevalence of positive emotions in various countries, we see that Latin American countries like Paraguay, Costa Rica, and Mexico, as well as Laos in Southeast Asia, occupy the top positions, with Iceland third in the world and other Nordic countries in positions ranging from 15 to 36.<sup>[56]</sup>

Similarly, Gallup World Poll's Positive Experience Index has nine Latin American countries and Indonesia in the top 10.[\[57\]](#) Nordic countries thus seem to be places where people experience quite frequent positive emotions, but they are not the countries where people report the most frequent positive emotions.

Similarly, in a ranking of countries by lack of negative emotions, Iceland (3rd), Sweden (9th) and Finland (10th) make it into the top ten, while Denmark and Norway are 24th and 26th, respectively.[\[58\]](#) What these results demonstrate is the multidimensional nature of human wellness and well-being.

High life satisfaction, on an individual or national level, is not a guarantee that one has high frequency of positive emotions or low frequency of negative emotions. Examining multiple indicators of happiness leads to a richer picture of the type and nature of national happiness.[\[59\]](#)

When newspapers declared Denmark the happiest country on earth in 2012, 2013, and 2016, Norway in 2017, and Finland in 2018 and 2019, many citizens of these countries were taken by surprise, because they held much more melancholic self-images. Perhaps they were thinking about smiling, displays of joy or other indicators of positive affect, concluding rightly that they are not as prevalent in these countries as in some other countries.

Yet, if they would have been thinking about life satisfaction, they very well could have concluded that yes, despite our grudges, citizens here tend to be quite satisfied with how their lives have turned out. As noted, of the multiple well-being measures, general life evaluation is the one most frequently used and recommended[\[60\]](#) for evaluating the well-being of countries, as it is more responsive than positive or negative emotions to changes in various national-level factors, such as wealth or policy decisions.

## 6.4 History and the hunt for the root cause

The key difficulty in explaining Nordic exceptionalism is that the Nordic countries rank highly on such a number of well-being predicting indicators that it is hard to disentangle cause and effect. There are a cluster of factors that tend to co-occur, including high life satisfaction, high levels of social and institutional trust, high-quality democratic institutions, extensive welfare benefits, and social-economic equality, and this cluster of factors is nowhere else so strong as in the Nordics.[\[61\]](#) However, from the point of view of policy-makers interested in replicating the Nordic model, it is not particularly helpful to know just that all of these positive factors are concentrated in the same countries; rather, policy-makers need concrete ways to produce higher levels of happiness, and those can be hard to find.



[Source: Image](#)

For example, Rothstein and Uslaner argue that if a country is trapped in a vicious cycle of low social and institutional trust, high corruption, and high levels of inequality, it can be hard to build the citizen and public servant trust needed to make the necessary reforms for a more trustworthy and representative system that serves all citizens equally.<sup>[62]</sup>

The Nordic countries, in contrast, are arguably caught up in a virtuous cycle, where well-functioning and democratic institutions are able to provide citizens extensive benefits and security, so that citizens trust institutions and each other, which leads them to vote for parties that promise to preserve the welfare model.<sup>[63]</sup> Both of these situations might be thought of as relatively stable, and thus, the crucial question is how to get from a low-trust equilibrium to a high-trust equilibrium. Here, a historical look into how the Nordic countries made this leap provides some insight.

In the beginning of the modern era, the Nordic countries didn't have the kind of feudalism and serfdom that characterized continental Europe and Russia. Farmers were relatively more independent and many of them owned the land they cultivated. Furthermore, in the decades leading to the twentieth century, farmers held significant political power, even within the Nordic parliaments.<sup>[64]</sup>

Although there were class conflicts in the Nordic countries, as well – most dramatically the Finnish Civil War between leftist “reds” and rightist “whites” in 1918 that led to over 30,000 casualties – the divide in the Nordics was less deep than in most other countries during that era, making possible “a historical compromise” and the development of a “spirit of trust” between the laboring classes and the elite in the early decades of the twentieth century.<sup>[65]</sup>

While in other Nordic countries, the transformation was peaceful, what is remarkable of the Finnish trajectory is how quickly after the civil war the unification of the country started. Many institutions were reconstructed in a few years. For instance, less than a year after the end of the war, the Social Democratic Party, which had been on the losing side of the war, was allowed to participate in general elections and became the biggest party in the parliament. Within a few years, most of the reforms that the left had fought for in the civil war, such as the agrarian land reform, had been implemented through parliamentary means.



[Source: Image](#)

One potential root cause for the Nordic model thus could be the fact that the Nordic countries didn't have the deep class divides and economic inequality of most other countries at the beginning of the twentieth century. Research tends to show that inequality has a strong effect on generalized trust.[\[66\]](#)

In more equal societies, people trust each other more. This increased trust contributes in the long term to a preference for a stronger and more universal welfare state. Although statistics about social trust do not exist from a hundred years ago, we know that levels of social trust tend to be remarkably stable over relatively long historical periods[\[67\]](#), supporting the role of social trust as contributing to the building of better institutions.

The quality of governmental institutions seems to also have been relatively good in the Nordic countries already in the late 19th century, with independent court systems able to handle corruption-related matters fairly well.[\[68\]](#) This made key institutions more trustworthy and reliable, giving both the common people and the elite the sense that reforms could be effective and would fulfill their purpose.

Another important underlying factor might have been mass education. Uslaner and Rothstein have shown that the mean number of years of schooling in a country in 1870 is surprisingly strongly correlated with the corruption level of the same country in 2010, explaining 70% of its variance.[\[69\]](#)

The Nordic countries invested heavily in universal and free education for all citizens, and one of the key goals was to produce citizens that have a strong national identity and sense of social cohesion, contributing to more social trust and institutional trust. Mass education was typically introduced in 19th century as a means of building stronger states.[\[70\]](#)

Often this was related to external threats that scared the elites to push for reforms to make their states more efficient, meritocratic, and less corrupt because this was seen as necessary for the survival of the state in the face of these threats.[\[71\]](#)

As regards historical influences, some people argue that the legacy of the Protestant religion dominant in the Nordic countries contributes to Nordic exceptionalism. Indeed, in cross-cultural comparisons, Protestantism seems to be positively related to institutional quality and generalized trust, as well as higher life satisfaction.[\[72\]](#) However, given that there are relatively few Protestant countries in the world, it is hard to say whether this has something to do with religion itself or if it is just a historical coincidence.

For example, Broms and Rothstein argue that it was not the religious doctrines of Protestantism that contributed to more inclusive state institutions later on, but rather the fact that the local parishes in Protestant countries were more inclusive, egalitarian, representative, and monetarily accountable already in the 16th century as compared to other religious institutions.[\[73\]](#) Rather than being an explanation for high institutional quality in Nordic countries, Protestant religious institutions might have been one part in the chain of historical institutional development taking place in the Nordic countries.

Accordingly, one way to try to understand the Nordic model is to state that high levels of social and institutional trust produced by mass education and relatively equal societal setting in the beginning of the 20th century made possible the public support for the welfare state policies that were introduced throughout the century, which further enhanced the social and institutional trust.

Although there are many historical particularities and path dependencies that make the picture more complex, one could argue that the main flow of events towards the Nordic model started from low levels of inequality and mass education, which transformed into social and institutional trust, and later allowed for the formation of well-functioning welfare state institutions.[\[74\]](#)

## 6.5 Conclusion

The Nordic countries are characterized by a virtuous cycle in which various key institutional and cultural indicators of good society feed into each other including well-functioning democracy, generous and effective social welfare benefits, low levels of crime and corruption, and satisfied citizens who feel free and trust each other and governmental institutions.

While this chapter focuses on the Nordic countries, a quick glance at the other countries regularly found at the top of international comparisons of life satisfaction – Switzerland, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Canada, and Australia – reveals that they also have most of the same elements in place.

Thus, there seems to be no secret sauce specific to Nordic happiness that is unavailable to others. There is rather a more general recipe for creating highly satisfied citizens: Ensure that state institutions are of high quality, non-corrupt, able to deliver what they promise, and generous in taking care of citizens in various adversities.

Granted, there is a gap between knowing what a happiness-producing society looks like and transforming a certain society to follow that model. Low-trust societies easily get trapped into a vicious cycle where low levels of trust in corrupt institutions lead to low willingness to pay taxes and low support for reforms that would allow the state to take better care of its citizens. Thus, there is no easy path from the vicious cycle into a virtuous cycle. However, we shall give a few ideas for constructing what we see as helpful pathways.

Firstly, the quality of institutions plays a key role in ensuring citizen happiness. Thus, minimizing corruption and maximizing citizen participation and representation in various decisions can help to ensure that institutions serve citizens and maintain their trust. Democratic quality and factors such as free press, informed and educated citizens, and strong civic society play an important role in keeping the government accountable and citizen-oriented.



*Source: Image*

On a cultural level, arguably the most important factor is to generate a sense of community, trust, and social cohesion among citizens. A divided society has a hard time providing the kind of public goods that would universally support each citizen's ability to live a happier life. In a divided society, people also tend to be less supportive of various welfare benefits because worry they would benefit the 'other' groups, as well. When people care about each other and trust each other, this provides a much more stable base on which to build public support for various public goods and welfare benefit programs.

Thus, institutionally, building a government that is trustworthy and functions well, and culturally, building a sense of community and unity among the citizens are the most crucial steps towards a society where people are happy. While the Nordic countries took their own particular paths to their current welfare state model, each country must follow its own path. If citizen well-being and happiness are truly the goals of government, then taking seriously research on institutional and cultural determinants of citizen happiness is the first step in starting an evidence-based journey towards fulfilling that goal.

## 6.6 References and Endnotes

For a full list of references and the endnotes, please click on

<https://worldhappiness.report/ed/2020/the-nordic-exceptionalism-what-explains-why-the-nordic-countries-are-constantly-among-the-happiest-in-the-world/#:~:text=The%20Nordic%20countries%20invested%20heavily,social%20trust%20and%20institutional%20trust>

The World Happiness Report is a partnership of Gallup, the Oxford Wellbeing Research Centre, the UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network, and the WHR's Editorial Board. The report is produced under the editorial control of the WHR Editorial Board.

From 2024, the World Happiness Report is a publication of the Wellbeing Research Centre at the University of Oxford, UK.



*Source: Image*



## 7. Global and Indian trends on data sharing and protection – a synthesis of three articles

---



*Source: Image*

### 7.1 What is the India Digital Personal Data Protection Act (DPDPA) 2023?<sup>4</sup>

The India Digital Personal Data Protection Act 2023 (DPDPA) is a landmark legislation that aims to safeguard the privacy of individuals in the digital age.

The Act came into effect on September 1, 2023, and it applies to all organizations that process personal data of individuals in India.

#### 7.1.1 What is personal data?

Personal data is defined under the DPDPA as "any data that relates to a natural person who can be identified, directly or indirectly, in particular by reference to an identifier such as a name, an identification number, location data, or an online identifier." This broad definition encompasses a wide range of information, including but not limited to:

- Name, address, and contact information
- Date of birth and gender
- Financial information, such as bank account numbers and credit card details
- Online browsing history and search queries
- Social media posts and messages
- Location data, such as GPS coordinates

---

<sup>4</sup> From Secure privacy.ai  
[https://secureprivacy.ai/blog/india-digital-personal-data-protection-act-2023-guide-protected-data#:~:text=The%20India%20Digital%20Personal%20Data%20Protection%20Act%202023%20\(DPDPA\)%20is,data%20of%20individuals%20in%20India](https://secureprivacy.ai/blog/india-digital-personal-data-protection-act-2023-guide-protected-data#:~:text=The%20India%20Digital%20Personal%20Data%20Protection%20Act%202023%20(DPDPA)%20is,data%20of%20individuals%20in%20India)

### 7.1.2 What data is protected by the DPDPA?

The DPDPA protects personal data that is processed in India, regardless of whether the data was originally collected in India or elsewhere. The Act also applies to the processing of personal data of Indian citizens, even if the data is processed outside of India.

The DPDPA does not apply to personal data that is:

- Processed for law enforcement or national security purposes
- Processed for the purpose of journalism or artistic expression
- Processed for personal or family purposes

### 7.1.3 Key principles of the DPDPA

The DPDPA is based on six key principles:

- **Lawfulness:** Personal data must be processed lawfully, fairly, and transparently.
- **Purpose Limitation:** Personal data must be collected for specified, explicit, and legitimate purposes and not further processed in a manner that is incompatible with those purposes.
- **Data Minimization:** Personal data must be adequate, relevant, and limited to what is necessary in relation to the purposes for which they are processed.
- **Accuracy:** Personal data must be accurate and, where necessary, kept up to date.
- **Storage Limitation:** Personal data must be kept in a form which permits identification of data subjects for no longer than is necessary for the purposes for which the personal data are processed.
- **Integrity and Confidentiality:** Personal data must be processed in a manner that ensures appropriate security of the personal data, including protection against unauthorized or unlawful processing and against accidental loss, destruction, or damage, using appropriate technical or organizational measures.



[Source: Image](#)



#### 7.1.4 Rights of data principals

The DPDPA grants individuals several rights with respect to their personal data, including:

- The right to access their personal data
- The right to rectification of inaccurate personal data
- The right to erasure of their personal data
- The right to restrict the processing of their personal data
- The right to data portability
- The right to object to the processing of their personal data

#### 7.1.5 Enforcement of the DPDPA

The DPDPA is enforced by the Data Protection Authority of India (DPA), which is an independent body responsible for overseeing the implementation of the Act. The DPA has the power to investigate complaints, issue fines, and order organizations to comply with the Act.

#### 7.1.6 Final thoughts

The DPDPA is a significant piece of legislation that will have a profound impact on the way that organizations collect, use, and share personal data in India. The Act provides individuals with greater control over their personal data and imposes stricter obligations on organizations that process personal data. Organizations that are subject to the DPDPA should take steps to ensure that they are in compliance with the Act.

## 7.2 India's Digital Personal Data Protection Act 2023 vs. the GDPR: A Comparison<sup>5</sup>

The Indian parliament enacted India's first comprehensive data protection law on 11 August 2023, namely the Digital Personal Data Protection Act 2023 (the DPDPA). The DPDPA will replace India's existing patchwork of data protection rules<sup>1</sup> and is expected to trigger significant changes in how companies subject to Indian data protection laws process personal data. However, the law is not yet operational; no effective date has been established and there is no official timeline for the overall implementation.

Stakeholders expect the law to come into force in a phased manner in the next six to 12 months, after: (i) an independent agency responsible for enforcing the DPDPA — the Data Protection Board of India (the Data Protection Board) — is established; and (ii) the Indian government has framed the subordinate rules (which are expected to provide interpretative guidance on procedural steps and enforcement methodology). The DPDPA is “umbrella” legislation, as it sets out only a high-level framework for India's new data protection regime, with supplementary rules expected in due course.

Though the new law is not yet operational, companies subject to the new law are advised to begin assessing potential practical implications at an early stage. The DPDPA is triggered when digital personal data is processed within India. The law also has an extraterritorial effect in that it applies to digital personal data processing outside of India if such processing relates to the offering of goods or services to individuals (known as “data principals”, which are equivalent to “data subjects” under the EU and UK General Data Protection Regulations (the GDPR)) within India. The DPDPA follows broadly similar principles to those set out in the GDPR and specifies rules for data fiduciaries (equivalent to “controllers” under the GDPR) and data processors, and rights for data principals (equivalent to “data subjects” under the GDPR).

Penalties for non-compliance under the DPDPA range from INR 500 million to INR 2.5 billion. The Data Protection Board is also empowered to impose urgent remedial or mitigation measures in the event of a personal data breach.

### 7.2.1 Practical impact on existing privacy compliance programmes



[Source: Image](#)

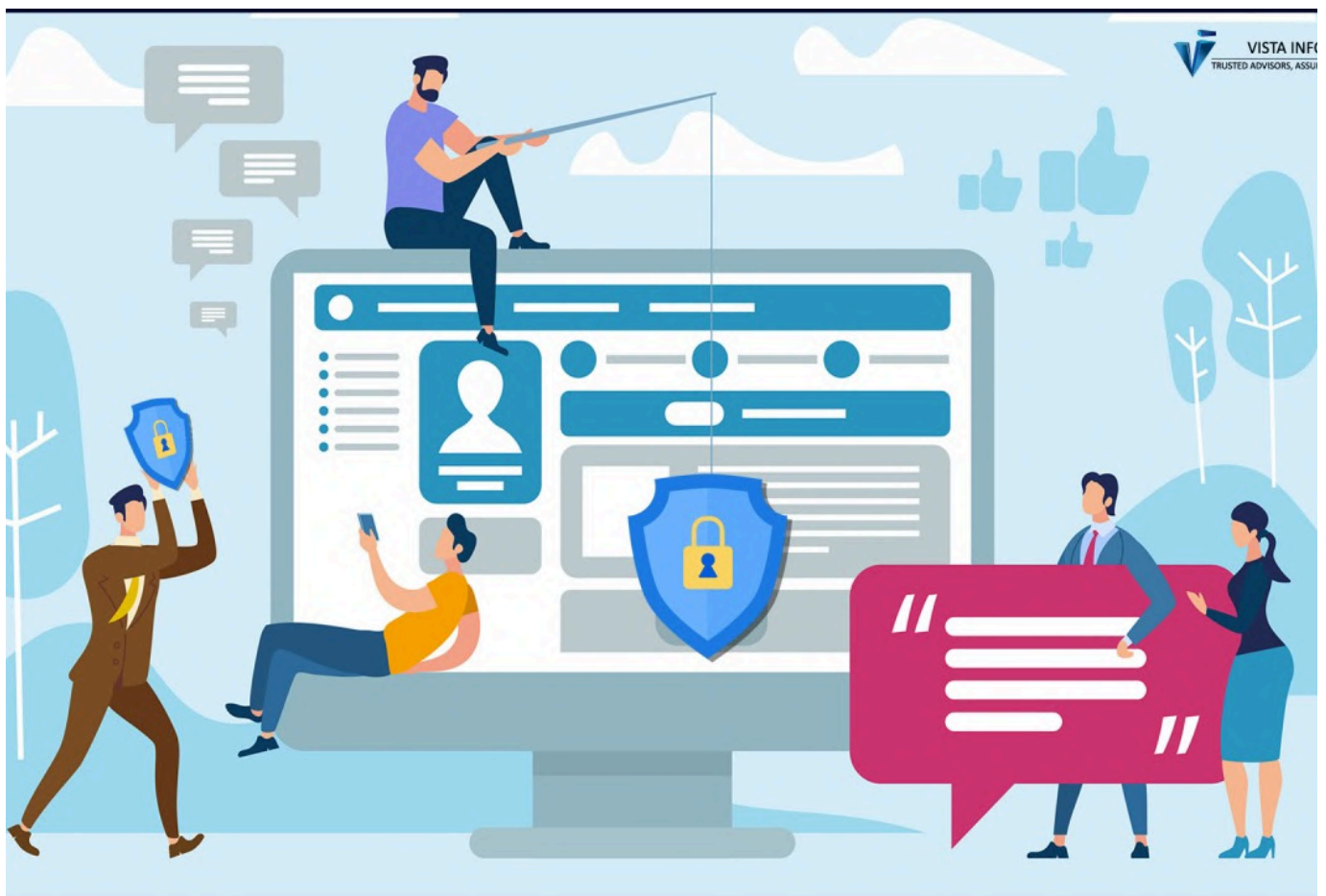
The DPDPA signals a major change in the way personal data is processed in India. Organisations operating in or targeting individuals in India should consider preemptive steps to bring their privacy compliance in line with the DPDPA, including as regards data collection and consent mapping practices. Key differences between the DPDPA and the GDPR include:

- **Scope:** The DPDPA regulates the processing of digital personal data, i.e., personal data collected in digital form, or collected in non-digital form and subsequently digitised. Whilst the DPDPA's personal data definition is similar to that provided under the GDPR, it excludes from its scope personal data made publicly available by the data principal or by any other person under a legal obligation to make that data publicly available.
- **Legal basis for processing of personal data:** The DPDPA provides that data fiduciaries may lawfully process personal data only with the consent of the data principals or for certain specified "legitimate uses". Such legitimate uses include: processing of personal data voluntarily shared by the data principal for a specified purpose (provided that the data principal does not object); processing to comply with the law or court orders; for employment purposes; or to respond to medical emergencies, epidemics, or disasters. The DPDPA's consent standard is similar to that of the GDPR, requiring consent to be "free, specific, informed, unconditional and unambiguous with a clear affirmative action" and, unlike the GDPR, it does not permit processing under the lawful bases of contractual necessity or legitimate interests.
- **Data principal rights:** Whilst data principals will have certain rights similar to those under the GDPR for data subjects (i.e., rights of access, correction, or erasure), they will also benefit from a number of new rights which are unique to the DPDPA, i.e., the right to a readily available and effective means of grievance redressal (e.g., via a grievance redressal officer), and the right to nominate an individual who will be able to exercise the rights of the data principal in the event of death or incapacity of the data principal.

- Cross-border data transfers: The DPDPA permits cross-border data transfers to jurisdictions outside of India other than those jurisdictions specifically identified by the Indian government on its list of countries to which data transfers are restricted (to be published); otherwise, the DPDPA does not require the implementation of a transfer mechanism.
- Data breach notification: Data fiduciaries are required to notify personal data breaches to the newly created Data Protection Board and to impacted data subjects, regardless of the magnitude of the breach or risk of harm. Further, the DPDPA does not prescribe specific deadlines for reporting.
- Significant data fiduciaries: The Indian government will have the power to classify certain data fiduciaries as significant data fiduciaries based on factors such as the sensitivity and volume of data processed, the impact of processing on the rights of data principals, and the impact on the sovereignty, security, and integrity of India. These significant data fiduciaries will have additional obligations, including the appointment of an independent auditor and undertaking data protection impact assessments.

The table in the link below compares the requirements of the GDPR and the DPDPA in further detail, highlighting potential gaps in GDPR-based compliance programmes and outlining possible steps to uplift such programmes for DPDPA compliance purposes. As additional rules to supplement the DPDPA provisions are issued, organisations may need to adjust their compliance approaches accordingly.

<https://www.lw.com/admin/upload/SiteAttachments/Indias-Digital-Personal-Data-Protection-Act-2023-vs-the-GDPR-A-Comparison.pdf>



*Source: Image*

## 7.3 Marking the Web's 35th Birthday: An Open Letter from Tim Berners-Lee



Underlying its whole infrastructure was the intention to allow for collaboration, foster compassion and generate creativity.

The web was decentralised with a long-tail of content and options, it created small, more localised communities, provided individual empowerment and fostered huge value.

When the web turned 30, I called out some of the dysfunction caused by the web being dominated by the self-interest of several corporations in the past decade - from the centralisation of platforms to the AI revolution the web serves as the foundational layer of our online ecosystem.

The first is the extent of power concentration, which contradicts the decentralised spirit I originally envisioned. This has segmented the web, with a fight to keep users hooked on one platform to optimise profit through the passive observation of content.

Compounding this issue is the second, the personal data market that has exploited people's time and data with the creation of deep profiles that allow for targeted advertising and ultimately control over the information people are fed.

Part of the solution is the Solid Protocol, a specification and a movement to provide each person with their own 'personal online data store', known as a POD. [See next page]

[https://medium.com/@timberners\\_lee/marking-the-webs-35th-birthday-an-open-letter-ebb410cc7d42](https://medium.com/@timberners_lee/marking-the-webs-35th-birthday-an-open-letter-ebb410cc7d42)

Issued on Mar 12, 2024

## 7.4 Solid

from <https://solidproject.org/>



Solid is a specification that lets people store their data securely in decentralized data stores called Pods. Pods are like secure personal web servers for your data. Entities control access to the data in their Pod. Entities decide what data to share and with whom (be those individuals, organizations, applications, etc.), and can revoke access at any time. To store and access data in a Pod, Solid-enabled applications use standard, open, and interoperable data formats and protocols.

### 7.4.1 Data

Any kind of data can be stored in a Solid Pod — from structured data to files that one might store in a Google Drive or Dropbox folder. What makes Solid special is the ability to store data in a way that promotes interoperability. Specifically, Solid supports storing Linked Data. Structuring data as Linked Data means that different applications can work with the same data.

### 7.4.2 Fully interoperable standards

All data in a Solid Pod is stored and accessed using standard, open, and interoperable data formats and protocols. Solid uses a common, shared way of describing things and their relationships to one another that different applications can understand. This gives Solid the unique ability to allow different applications to work with the same data.

### 7.4.3 Access

With Solid's Authentication and Authorization systems, one can determine which people and applications can access their data. Entities can grant or revoke access to any slice of their data as needed. Consequently, entities can do more with their data, because the applications they decide to use can be granted access to a wider and more diverse set of information. And just as one can share their data with others, others can also share their data in return. This creates rich and collaborative experiences across a combination of both personal and shared data.





RAJIV GANDHI  
INSTITUTE FOR CONTEMPORARY STUDIES

### **Rajiv Gandhi Institute for Contemporary Studies**

Jawahar Bhawan,  
Dr Rajendra Prasad Road,  
New Delhi 110 001  
India

#### **Please visit us at:**



[www.rgics.org](http://www.rgics.org)



<https://www.facebook.com/rgics/>



<https://www.youtube.com/user/RGICSIndia>